

# Ensign

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**Taking Comfort from the  
Empty Tomb, p. 12**

**Singles and Marrieds:  
Together in the Faith, p. 42**





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**Why Weepst Thou, by Simon Dewey**

*“Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepst thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master” (John 20:15–16).*

# Ensign



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**AN OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS**

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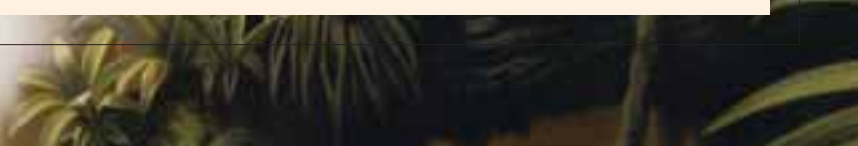
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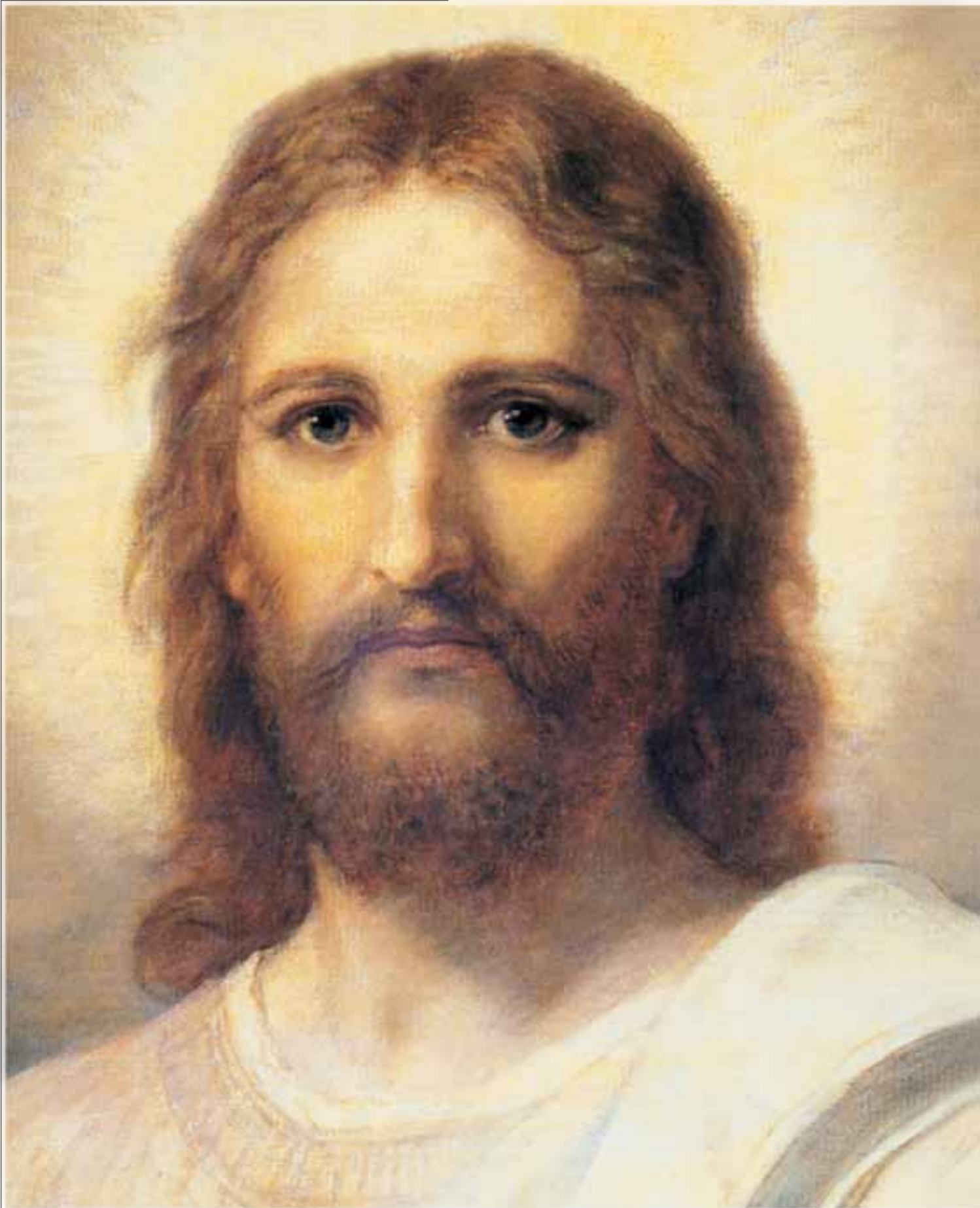
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**16** *Becoming a Disciple of Christ*





# Becoming Our Best Selves

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON  
First Counselor in the First Presidency

During a time long past, and in a place far away, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ taught the multitudes and His disciples “the way, the truth, and the life.”<sup>1</sup> He provided counsel with His holy words. He lived an example for us with His exemplary life.

His teachings and His example prompted Peter to ask this question: “What manner of persons ought ye to be?”<sup>2</sup> During His ministry on the American continent, the Lord Jesus Christ added significant words when He answered the same question: “What manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am.”<sup>3</sup>

## Seeking the Best in Us

In His earthly ministry, the Master outlined how we should live, how we should teach, how we should serve, and what we should do so that we could become our best selves.

One such lesson comes from the book of John in the Holy Bible:

“Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto

him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

“And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

“Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!”<sup>4</sup>

In our mortal journey, the advice of the Apostle Paul provides heavenly guidance: “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Then came the concluding charge: “Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.”<sup>5</sup>

In the search for our best selves, several questions will guide our thinking: Am I what I want to be? Am I closer to the Savior today than I was yesterday? Will I be closer yet tomorrow? Do I have the courage to change for the better?



*In the search for our best selves, several questions will guide our thinking: Am I what I want to be? Am I closer to the Savior today than I was yesterday? Will I be closer yet tomorrow? Do I have the courage to change for the better?*

**I**t is in the home that we form our attitudes, our deeply held beliefs. It is in the home that hope is fostered or destroyed. Our homes are to be places where God's Spirit can dwell, where the storm stops at the door, where love reigns and peace dwells.



### Choosing the Family Path

It is time to choose an oft-forgotten path, the path we might call “the family way,” so that our children and grandchildren might indeed grow to their full potential. There is an international tide running. It carries the unspoken message, “Return to your roots, to your families, to lessons learned, to lives lived, to examples shown, even family values.” Often

it is just a matter of coming home—coming home to attics not recently examined,

to diaries seldom read, to photo albums almost forgotten.

The Scottish poet James Barrie wrote, “God gave us memory so that we might have roses in December.”<sup>6</sup> What memories do we have of Mother? Father? Grandparents? Family? Friends?

What lessons have we learned from our fathers? Years ago a father asked Elder ElRay L. Christiansen (1897–1975), Assistant to the Twelve Apostles, what name Elder Christiansen could suggest for the man's newly acquired boat. Elder Christiansen suggested, “Why not call it *The Sabbath Breaker*?” I'm confident the would-be sailor pondered whether his pride and joy would be a Sabbath breaker or a Sabbath keeper. Whatever his decision, it no doubt left a lasting impression upon his children.

It is in the home that we form our attitudes, our deeply held beliefs. It is in the home that hope is fostered or destroyed. Our homes are to be more than sanctuaries; they should also be places where God's Spirit can dwell, where the storm stops at the door, where love reigns and peace dwells.

A young mother wrote to me: “Sometimes I wonder if I make a difference in my children's lives. Especially as a single mother working two jobs to make ends meet, I sometimes come home to confusion, but I never give up hope.

“My children and I were watching a television broadcast of general conference, and you were speaking



about prayer. My son made the statement, 'Mother, you've already taught us that.' I said, 'What do you mean?' And he replied, 'Well, you've taught us to pray and showed us how, but the other night I came to your room to ask something and found you on your knees praying to Heavenly Father. If He's important to you, He'll be important to me.' The letter concluded, "I guess you never know what kind of influence you'll be until a child observes you doing yourself what you have tried to teach him to do." What a magnificent lesson a child learned from his mother.

As a boy, I made a startling discovery in Sunday School one Mother's Day which has remained with me all through the years. Melvin, a sightless brother in the ward, a talented vocalist, would stand and face the congregation as though he were seeing one and all. He would then sing "That Wonderful Mother of Mine." The bright, glowing embers of memory penetrated human hearts. Men reached for their handkerchiefs; women's eyes brimmed with tears.

We deacons would go among the congregation carrying a small geranium in a clay pot for presentation to each mother. Some of the mothers were young; some were middle-aged; some were barely hanging on to life in their old age. I became aware that the eyes of each mother were kind eyes. The words of each mother were, "Thank you." I felt the spirit of the statement, "When someone gives another person a flower, the fragrance of the flower lingers on the hands of the giver." I have not forgotten the lesson learned, nor shall I ever forget it.

#### **Giving Our Lives in Service**

The years have come and the years have gone, but the need for a testimony of the gospel continues paramount. As we move toward the future, we must not neglect the lessons

**W**e are asked to give our lives in service. There are lessons to be taught, souls to be saved.



of the past. Our Heavenly Father gave His Son. The Son of God gave His life. We are asked by Them to give our lives, as it were, in Their divine service. Will you? Will I? Will we? There are lessons to be taught; there are kind deeds to be done; there are souls to be saved.

Let us remember the counsel of King Benjamin: "When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God."<sup>7</sup> Reach out to rescue those who need your help. Lift such to the higher road and the better way. As we sing in Primary: "Lead me, guide me, walk beside me, / Help me find the way. / Teach me all that I must do / To live with him someday."<sup>8</sup>

Real faith is not restricted to childhood but rather applies to all. We learn from the Proverbs:

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

"In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."<sup>9</sup>

When we do, we will come to realize that we have been on His holy errand, that His divine purposes have been fulfilled, and that we have shared in that fulfillment.

May I illustrate this truth with a personal experience. Many years ago, while serving as a bishop, I felt impressed to call upon Augusta Schneider, a widow from the Alsace-Lorraine area of Europe who spoke very little English, although she was fluent in French and German. For years after that first impression, I would visit with her at Christmastime. On one occasion, Augusta said, "Bishop, I have something of great value to me which I would like to present to you." She then went to a special place in her modest apartment and retrieved the gift. It was a beautiful piece of felt, perhaps six by eight inches (15 by 20 cm) in size, to which she had pinned the medals her husband had been presented for his service as a member of the French forces in World War I. She said, "I would like you to have

this personal treasure which is so close to my heart.” I protested politely and suggested there must be some member of her extended family to whom the gift should be given. “No,” she replied firmly, “the gift is yours, for you have the soul of a Frenchman.”

Shortly after presenting this special gift to me, Augusta departed mortality and went home to that God who gave her life. Occasionally I would wonder concerning her declaration that I had “the soul of a Frenchman.” I didn’t have the slightest idea what that meant. I still don’t.

Many years later, I had the privilege to accompany President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) to the dedication of the Frankfurt Germany Temple, which temple would serve German-, French-, and Dutch-speaking members. In packing for the trip, I felt impressed to take along the gift of medals, without any thought concerning what I would do with them. I’d had them a number of years.

For a French-speaking dedication session, the temple was filled. The singing and messages presented were beautiful. Gratitude for God’s blessings penetrated each heart. I saw from my conducting notes that the session included members from the Alsace-Lorraine area.

During my remarks, I observed that the organist had the name of Schneider. I therefore related the account of my association with Augusta Schneider, then stepped to the organ and presented the organist with the medals, along with the charge that since his name was Schneider, he had a responsibility to pursue the Schneider name in his genealogical activities. The Spirit of the Lord confirmed in our hearts that this was a special session. Brother Schneider had a difficult time preparing to play the closing number of the dedicatory service, so moved was he by the Spirit which we felt there in the temple.

I knew that the treasured gift—even the widow’s mite, for it was all Augusta Schneider had—was placed in the hand of one who would ensure that many with the souls of Frenchmen would now receive the blessings the holy temples provide, both for the living and for those who have passed beyond mortality.

I testify that with God, all things are possible. He is our

Heavenly Father; His Son is our Redeemer. As we strive to learn His truths and then to live them, our lives and the lives of others will be abundantly blessed.

I declare in all soberness that Gordon B. Hinckley is a true prophet for our time and is guided in the great work going forward under his leadership.

May we ever remember that obedience to God’s commandments brings forth the blessings promised. May each of us qualify to receive them. ■

#### NOTES

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. John 14:6.         | 6. <i>Courage</i> (1925), 1.  |
| 2. 2 Peter 3:11.      | 7. Mosiah 2:17.   |
| 3. 3 Nephi 27:27.     | 8. Naomi W. Randall, “I Am a Child of God,” <i>Hymns</i> , no. 301. |
| 4. John 1:45–47.      | 9. Proverbs 3:5–6.  |
| 5. Philippians 4:8–9. |   |

## IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples.

1. Bring the following objects (or similar ones) with you to your visit: a mirror, a picture of a home, a garden tool. Read 3 Nephi 27:27, and ask what this scripture might have to do with these three objects. Explain that President Monson teaches us three ways we can be like Jesus Christ. As you study each section, use the corresponding object as a visual reminder of the teaching (for example, use the mirror with the section “Seeking the Best in Us”).

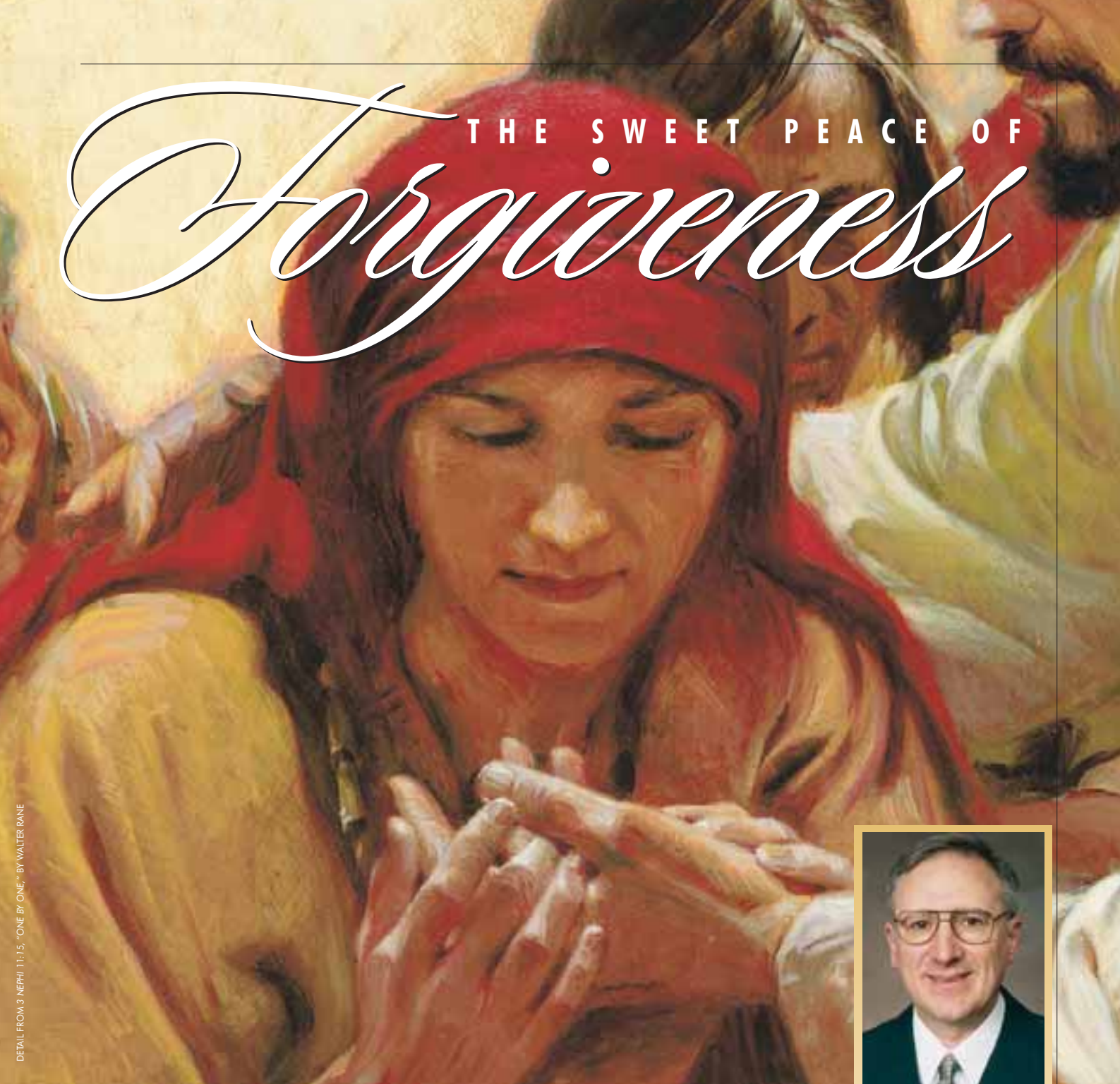
2. President Monson asks, “What lessons have we learned from our fathers?” Share an example from the article. Then ask family members about lessons they have learned from their own family. As appropriate, invite them to record stories to add to their family history.

3. After reviewing the message, ask: “What impresses you about President Monson’s message? What do you think President Monson wants us to learn from this message? What do you think President Monson wants us to do as a result of these teachings?”



THE SWEET PEACE OF

# Forgiveness



DETAIL FROM 3 NEPHI 11:15, "ONE BY ONE," BY WALTER RANE



**BY ELDER DANIEL P. ALVAREZ**  
Area Seventy  
South America South Area

**A** hundred and twenty-five years before the coming of Jesus Christ to the earth, King Benjamin gave an extraordinary address to his people. In it, he shared the message an angel had given him, a prophecy of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He told of the Savior's birth, ministry, and atoning sacrifice. He testified that "salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ" (Mosiah 3:18).

King Benjamin also warned that "the natural man is an enemy to God" and that we must each "[put] off the natural man and [become] a saint through the atonement of Christ" (Mosiah 3:19).

*True repentance brings forgiveness, which in turn brings peace and joy.*

As the king continued his address, the fear of the Lord came upon the people, and “they . . . viewed themselves in their own carnal state. . . . And they all cried aloud . . . : O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins” (Mosiah 4:2).

Then a wonderful thing happened: “The Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience” (Mosiah 4:3).


### **Obtaining Joy**

Joy is a condition of great happiness, which is the result of righteous living. Remission of sins comes when we meet the conditions of repentance. It is forgiveness for the wrongs we have committed and is made possible through

the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Peace of conscience is the inner calm and tranquility, born of the Spirit, that God gives to his faithful Saints.

In this troubled world, we all need joy and peace of conscience; and to return to the Father we all need the remission of our sins. How do we obtain these things? We must do as King Benjamin’s people did. We must become aware of our “own carnal state.” We must put our trust in the Lord, diligently keep the commandments, and continue in faith “even unto the end of [this] life” (see Mosiah 4:6). We must “repent of [our] sins and forsake them, and humble [ourselves] before God . . . ask [ing] in sincerity of heart that he would forgive [us]” (v. 10).

King Benjamin went on to tell his people that the joy they had experienced can and should be ongoing. He



*As King Benjamin preached to his people, they cried for forgiveness of their sins, and the Spirit filled their hearts with joy.*

**T**he Holy Spirit  
will reveal  
to us what we  
need to repent of.  
And He will also  
carry into our hearts  
the knowledge that  
what we are doing is  
pleasing to the Lord.

recited again the process: remembering the goodness and longsuffering of God, humbling ourselves, calling on the name of the Lord daily, and being steadfast (see v. 11). Then he made this great promise to them:

“And behold, I say unto you that if ye do this ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins” (v. 12).

Later, Mormon would describe how the righteous grow “stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts” (Helaman 3:35).

### **A Change of Heart**

This process brings a change of heart, or in other words, we lose the disposition to do evil and desire to do good continually (see Mosiah 5:2). Our relationships with our fellowmen become Christlike: “And ye will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably, and to render to every man according to that which is his due” (Mosiah 4:13). We teach and train our families according to the Lord’s pattern, and we deal with the poor and needy with compassion (see Mosiah 4:14–25).

### **Heavenly Helps**

The Lord has given us wonderful helps to aid us in accomplishing this transformation of heart. The natural or carnal man does not perceive the things of God (see Alma 26:21). But after we were baptized, the gift of the Holy Ghost was conferred upon us. Personal revelation is essential. The Holy Spirit will reveal to us what we need to repent of. And He will also carry into our hearts the knowledge that what we are doing is pleasing to the Lord. We need to obtain a spiritual confirmation, which is a wonderfully intimate and sacred experience. The Lord has promised, “I will impart unto you of my Spirit, which shall enlighten your mind, which shall fill your soul with joy” (D&C 11:13).

We have the scriptures to read and meditate upon. They testify of Christ and help us develop the faith that leads to

repentance. The more faith we have, the more knowledge we acquire, and then, in turn, we have more faith in our Savior. As we ponder the scriptures and our own lives, we will see our sins more clearly, and it will be easier for us to repent of them.

We have the gift of prayer, the privilege of directly communicating with our Father in Heaven. King Benjamin counseled his people to “ask in sincerity of heart . . . calling on the name of the Lord daily” (Mosiah 4:10–11).

### **Obtaining Forgiveness**

The Lord has established ordinances (baptism, the sacrament, and temple ordinances), and through these ordinances He allows us to make covenants with Him. If we do all we can to keep them, and if, through the Atonement of Christ, we obtain a remission of our sins, then “though [our] sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isaiah 1:18).

We can all obtain proof of this remission of sins: we will be filled with joy, will have peace of conscience, and will be filled with the love of God (see Mosiah 4:3, 12). Our sins will cause us no more pain (see Mosiah 27:29), and we will begin to bear fruit. The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, mildness, kindness, faith, meekness, and temperance (see Galatians 5:22–23).

The result of this whole process will be that we will become converted. We will desire to keep the commandments and will feel love and gratitude to our Heavenly Father for marking the path so clearly. Having been “filled with the love of God,” we “shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him that created [us]” (Mosiah 4:12).

May we all examine our lives as honestly as the people of King Benjamin did. And may we all experience the great joy that comes from sincere repentance and from the knowledge that our sins are remitted. I bear testimony that Jesus is the Christ and that this is His work. I am grateful to our Heavenly Father for the plan of salvation, the Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ, and the Restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith. ■

An illustration of a father and daughter in bed. The father is on the left, looking towards the daughter. The daughter is in the center, smiling and looking towards the father. A teddy bear is visible on the right side of the bed. The scene is set in a bedroom with a bed and pillows.

# Our Child, His Child

BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY  
Church Magazines


*How could I comfort my daughter when I was also in pain?*

**T**he familiar tug on my arm came at 3:15 a.m. Our seven-year-old daughter, Charlotte, stood by my bedside, frightened because of a scary dream. Her dreams came often, and more and more I was frustrated to know how to deal with them.

When Charlotte was younger and had a bad dream, she simply climbed into bed between my wife and me. There, safe and secure, she would fall asleep within minutes. Then I'd carry her back to her own bed and tuck her in again. But after my wife, Julene, developed cancer and had to undergo treatment, every toss and turn in the bed awakened her and brought her pain.

And so this time I pulled myself out of bed, reassured my daughter, and went with her to the room she shares with her sister. I helped her find her pillow, fluffed it up, let her lie down, then put a blanket over her. I pulled up a chair and sat next to her, holding her hand, telling her everything would be all right.

I had gone to bed tired and discouraged. I loved my wife and worried about her suffering. Despite insurance, the medical bills were piling up. Despite the many kindnesses of neighbors, there were household chores to catch up on. The children, especially Charlotte,



had to be constantly encouraged to do their share. I had Church assignments to fulfill. Concerns at the office were weighing me down. I had prayed for comfort and had not found comfort. And now, for the third night in a row, my daughter had awakened me in the middle of the night. I took a deep breath and patted her hand.

“Daddy, can we say a prayer?” Charlotte said.

“Of course we can, sweetie pie,” I replied.

“You go first,” she said, and I did. I tried to keep it simple so she would understand. I thanked Heavenly Father for our blessings. I asked Him to watch over two of our sons who were serving missions. I asked Him to bless Charlotte and me, to bring us peace. I felt prompted to say that although Charlotte had not yet been baptized and confirmed and didn’t yet have the *gift* of the Holy Ghost, she could still have the Lord’s Spirit to be with her. I prayed that the Spirit of the Lord would come.

“All right,” I said, after closing the prayer in the name of the Savior, “it’s your turn.”

Charlotte said a sweet, simple prayer. She asked Heavenly Father to bless her mommy, to bless her missionary brothers, and to bless her other brother and sister. Then she asked Him to bless us and to let the Holy Ghost be with her. She ended her prayer in the name of Jesus Christ.

I brushed her hair gently with my hand, and when she asked me to, I scratched an itchy place on her shoulder.

“Daddy,” she said, “can we sing a song?”

This was a familiar request. We often use songs, especially hymns, to chase fear away. Thinking it would lighten the mood, I started off with, “I looked out the window, and what did I see? Popcorn popping . . .”<sup>1</sup>

“No, Daddy,” she interrupted, “something else.”

I tried another favorite. “Jesus wants me for a sunbeam, To shine for him each day . . .”<sup>2</sup> She liked this one and

added in the word *beam* each time at just the right places.

We sang one of my favorites, “When He Comes Again,”<sup>3</sup> then “Jesus Once Was a Little Child,”<sup>4</sup> then “The Spirit of God,”<sup>5</sup> which the Primary children in our ward had memorized. Then I sang “Come, Come Ye Saints”<sup>6</sup> and “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet.”<sup>7</sup>

She squeezed my hand. “Daddy, can we pray again?” she asked sleepily.

“Sure,” I said. “This time you go first.” And she did. Her prayer was short but powerful. “Dear Heavenly Father,” she said, “even though I’m not baptized yet, thank You for sending the Spirit of the Lord to be with me. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.”

She snuggled into her pillow and quickly fell asleep. I sat in the night, realizing that her simple faith *had* brought the Spirit. I felt totally enveloped in peace. I realized that this child, our child, was also Heavenly Father’s child, and that He had heard her prayer. And I knew that I was also His child and that He had heard and answered my prayer. I knew that with simple faith I could always invite the Spirit and find answers to my concerns.

My worries didn’t disappear. It was now 4:45 a.m., and I still had to get up and face the day. But the peace lingered, so strong it brought tears. And with the peace came hope. I got up, showered and shaved, got dressed and ready for work. Tonight, I promised myself, the whole family would kneel and ask in faith for the Spirit to be with us. And because of the example of our child—Heavenly Father’s child—I knew the Spirit would be. ■

#### NOTES

1. “Popcorn Popping,” *Children’s Songbook*, 242.
2. “Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam,” *Children’s Songbook*, 60.
3. *Children’s Songbook*, 82–83.
4. *Children’s Songbook*, 55.
5. *Hymns*, no. 2.
6. *Hymns*, no. 30.
7. *Hymns*, no. 19.



# From the Garden to the Empty Tomb

## *Gethsemane*

**Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933)**

“Gethsemane.—The name means ‘oil-press’ and probably has reference to a mill maintained at the place for the extraction of oil from the olives there cultivated. John refers to the spot as a garden, from which designation we may regard it as an enclosed space of private ownership. That it was a place frequented by Jesus when He sought retirement for prayer, or opportunity for confidential converse with the disciples, is indicated by the same writer (John 18:1, 2)” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 620).

**President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972)**

“We speak of the passion of Jesus Christ. A great many people have an idea that when he was on the cross, and nails were driven into his hands and feet, that was his great suffering. His great suffering was before he ever was placed upon the cross. It was in the Garden of Gethsemane that the blood oozed from the pores of his

body: ‘Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink’ [D&C 19:18].

“That was not when he was on the cross; that was in the garden. That is where he bled from every pore in his body.

“Now I cannot comprehend that pain. I have suffered pain, you have suffered pain, and sometimes it has been quite severe; but I cannot comprehend pain, which is *mental anguish more than physical*, that would cause the blood, like sweat, to come out upon the body. It was something terrible, something terrific; so we can understand why he would cry unto his Father:

“‘If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt’ [Matthew 26:39]” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 1:130).

**President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)**

“On the night Jesus was betrayed, He took three of the Twelve and went into the place called Gethsemane. There He suffered the pains of all men. He suffered as only God could suffer, bearing our griefs, carrying our sorrows, being wounded for our transgressions, voluntarily submitting Himself to the iniquity of us all, just as Isaiah prophesied (see Isaiah 53:4–6).

“It was in Gethsemane that Jesus took on Himself the sins of the world, in Gethsemane that His pain was equivalent to the cumulative burden of all men, in Gethsemane that He descended below all things so that all could repent and come to Him. The mortal mind fails to fathom, the tongue cannot express, the pen of man cannot describe the breadth, the depth, the height of the suffering of our Lord—nor His infinite love for us” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 14).

**Elder James E. Talmage**

“Christ’s agony in the garden is unfathomable by the finite mind, both as to intensity and cause. . . . It was not physical pain, nor mental anguish alone, that caused Him to suffer such torture as to produce an extrusion of blood from every pore; but a spiritual agony of soul such as only God was capable of experiencing. No other man, however great his powers of physical or mental endurance, could have suffered so;

for his human organism would have succumbed, and syncope would have produced unconsciousness and welcome oblivion. In that hour of anguish Christ met and overcame all the horrors that Satan, ‘the prince of this world’ could inflict. . . .

“In some manner, actual and terribly real though to man incomprehensible, the Savior took upon Himself the burden of the sins of mankind from Adam to the end of the world” (*Jesus the Christ*, 613).

**President John Taylor (1808–87)**

“Groaning beneath this concentrated load, this intense, incomprehensible pressure, this terrible exaction of Divine justice, from which feeble humanity shrank, and through the agony thus experienced sweating great drops of blood, He was led to exclaim, ‘Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me’ [Matthew 26:39]. He had wrestled with the superincumbent load in the wilderness; He had struggled against the powers of darkness that had been let loose upon him there; placed below all things, His mind surcharged with agony and pain, lonely and apparently helpless and forsaken, in his agony the blood oozed from His pores” (*The Mediation and Atonement* [1882], 150).

**Calvary**

**Elder James E. Talmage**

“It seems, that in addition to the fearful suffering incident to crucifixion, the agony of Gethsemane had recurred, intensified beyond human power to endure. In that bitterest hour the dying Christ was alone, alone in most terrible reality. That the supreme sacrifice of the Son might be consummated in all its fulness, the Father seems to have withdrawn the support of His immediate Presence, leaving to the Savior of men the glory of complete victory over the forces of sin and death. . . .



“The period of faintness, the conception of utter forsakenness soon passed, and the natural cravings of the body reasserted themselves. The maddening thirst, which constituted one of the worst of the crucifixion agonies, wrung from the Savior’s lips His one recorded utterance expressive of physical suffering. ‘I thirst’ [John 19:28], He said. One of those who stood by, whether Roman or Jew, disciple or skeptic, we are not told, hastily saturated a sponge with vinegar, a vessel of which was at hand, and having fastened the sponge to the end of a reed, or stalk of hyssop, pressed it to the Lord’s fevered lips. . . .

“Fully realizing that He was no longer forsaken, but that His atoning sacrifice had been accepted by the Father, and that His mission in the flesh had been carried to glorious consummation, He exclaimed in a loud voice of holy triumph: ‘It is finished’ [John 19:30]. In reverence, resignation, and relief, He addressed the Father saying: ‘Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit’ [Luke 23:46]. He bowed His head, and voluntarily gave up His life.

“Jesus the Christ was dead. His life had not been taken from Him except as He had willed to permit. Sweet and welcome as would have been the relief of death in any of the earlier stages of His suffering from Gethsemane to the cross, He lived until all things were accomplished as had been appointed” (*Jesus the Christ*, 661–62).



### ***The Empty Tomb***

#### **President John Taylor**

“As a God, He descended below all things, and made Himself subject to man in man’s fallen condition; as a man, He grappled with all the circumstances incident to His sufferings in the world. Anointed, indeed, with the oil of gladness above His fellows, He struggled with and overcame the powers of men and devils, of earth and hell combined; and aided by this superior power of the Godhead, He vanquished death, hell and the grave, and arose triumphant as the Son of

God, the very eternal Father, the Messiah, the Prince of peace, the Redeemer, the Savior of the world” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor* [2001], 43).

#### **President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985)**

“Only a God could bring about this miracle of resurrection. As a teacher of righteousness, Jesus could inspire souls to goodness; as a prophet, he could foreshadow the future; as an intelligent leader of men, he could organize a church; and as a possessor



and magnifier of the priesthood, he could heal the sick, give sight to the blind, even raise other dead; but only as a God could he raise himself from the tomb, overcome death permanently, and bring incorruption in place of corruption, and replace mortality with immortality. . . .

“No human hands had been at work to remove the sealed door nor to resuscitate nor restore. No magician nor sorcerer had invaded the precincts to work his cures; not even the priesthood, exercised by another, had been brought in use to heal, but the God who had purposefully and intentionally laid down his life had, by the power of his godhead, taken up his life again. . . . The spirit which had been by him commended to his Father in Heaven from the cross, and which, according to his later reports, had been to the spirit world, had returned and, ignoring the impenetrable walls of the sepulcher, had entered the place, re-entered the body, had caused the stone door to be rolled away, and walked in life again, with his body changed to immortality, incorruptible—his every faculty keen and alert.

“Unexplainable? Yes! And not understandable—but incontestable. More than 500 unimpeachable witnesses had contact with him. They walked with him, talked with him, ate with him, felt the flesh of his body and saw the wounds in his side

and feet and hands; discussed with him the program which had been common to them, and him; and, by many infallible proofs knew and testified that he was risen, and that that last and most dreaded enemy, death, had been overcome. . . .

“And so we bear testimony that the being who created the earth and its contents, who made numerous appearances upon the earth prior to his birth in Bethlehem, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is resurrected and immortal, and that this great boon of resurrection and immortality becomes now, through our Redeemer, the heritage of mankind” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 17–18).

#### **President Gordon B. Hinckley**

“Then dawned the first day of the week, the Sabbath of the Lord as we have come to know it. To those who came to the tomb, heavy with sorrow, the attending angel declared, ‘Why seek ye the living among the dead?’ (Luke 24:5).

“‘He is not here: . . . he is risen, as he said’ (Matthew 28:6).

“Here was the greatest miracle of human history. Earlier He had told them, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life’ (John 11:25). But they had not understood. Now they knew. He had died in misery and pain and loneliness. Now, on the third day, He arose in power and beauty and life, the

firstfruits of all who slept, the assurance for men of all ages that ‘as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive’ (1 Corinthians 15:22).

“On Calvary He was the dying Jesus. From the tomb He emerged the Living Christ. The cross had been the bitter fruit of Judas’s betrayal, the summary of Peter’s denial. The empty tomb now became the testimony of His divinity, the assurance of eternal life, the answer to Job’s unanswered question: ‘If a man die, shall he live again?’ (Job 14:14). . . .

“And so, because our Savior lives, we do not use the symbol of His death as the symbol of our faith. But what shall we use? No sign, no work of art, no representation of form is adequate to express the glory and the wonder of the Living Christ. He told us what that symbol should be when He said, ‘If ye love me, keep my commandments’ (John 14:15).

“As His followers, we cannot do a mean or shoddy or ungracious thing without tarnishing His image. Nor can we do a good and gracious and generous act without burnishing more brightly the symbol of Him whose name we have taken upon ourselves. And so our lives must become a meaningful expression, the symbol of our declaration of our testimony of the Living Christ, the Eternal Son of the Living God” (“The Symbol of Our Faith,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Apr. 2005, 4–6). ■

# Becoming a Disciple of Christ



*Diligently seeking truth and living gospel principles with all one's mind and heart open the door for the Holy Spirit to transform us.*

**BY ELDER MERRILL J. BATEMAN**

Of the Presidency of the Seventy

**I**n Moroni 7:19, Mormon describes two steps along the path of life that, if taken, will transform a person into a spiritually begotten son or daughter of Christ. The first is to “search diligently in the light of Christ” so that good may be distinguished from evil. The second is to “lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not.” Earlier in the chapter, Mormon notes that every woman and man receives the Light of Christ as a gift to differentiate right from wrong. A more common name for this light is conscience, a discerning power by which individuals know good from evil (see Moroni 7:15–17).

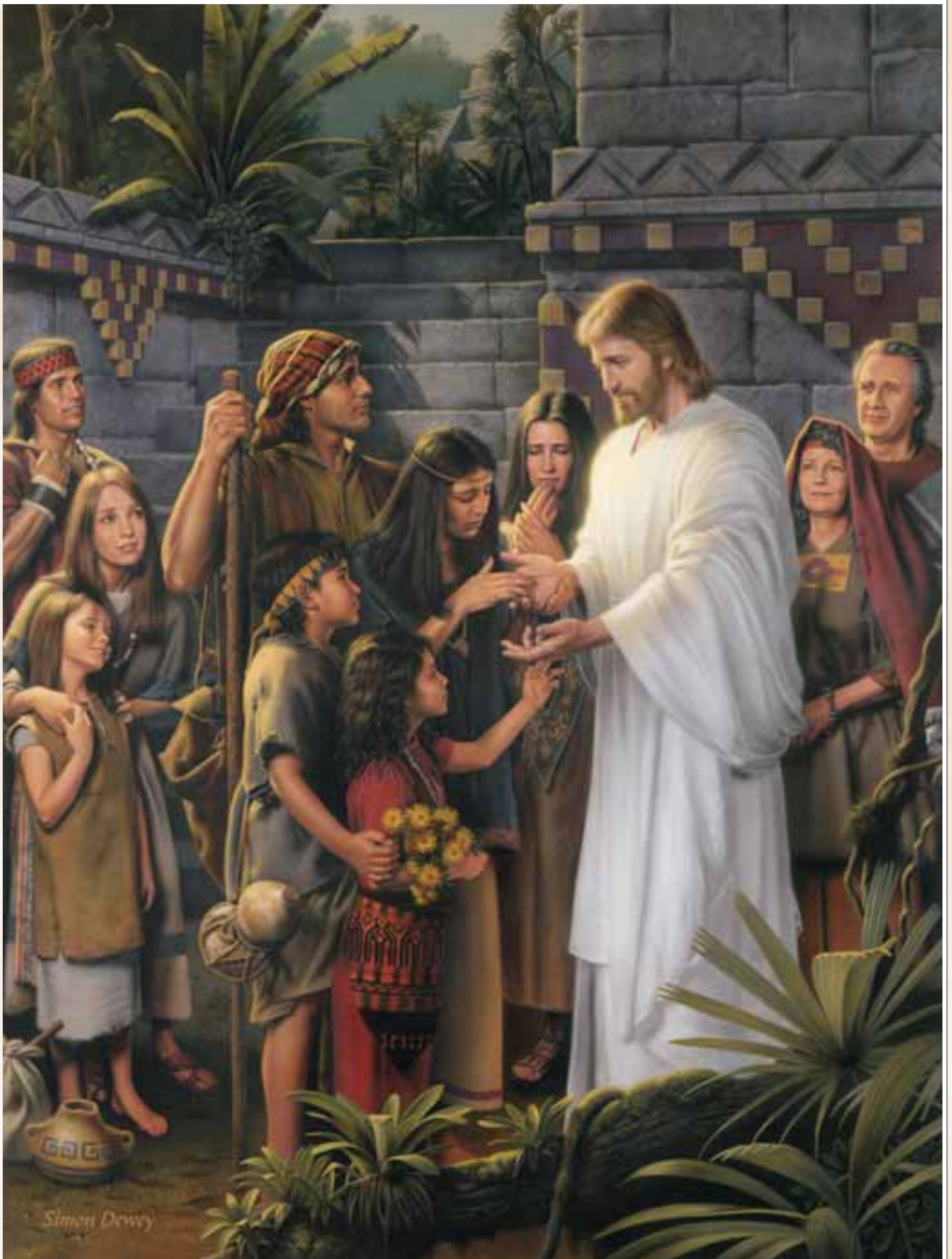
Mormon’s first step of searching diligently describes the quest for truth, for the good. His second step, to “lay hold upon every good thing,” means to live every good truth once it is found. In both the searching and the living, diligence is required. The Lord told the Prophet Joseph Smith that the process of learning truth or acquiring knowledge and intelligence comes through “diligence and obedience” (D&C 130:19). Laying hold upon or living truth also requires energy or effort, because the Lord expects us to serve with all our “heart, might, mind and strength” (D&C 4:2).

In the Lord’s plan, diligent effort involves both the heart and the mind. Diligently seeking truth and living gospel principles with all one’s mind and heart open the door for the Holy Spirit to transform us. We put off the natural man or woman because of the truths we value. With a humble heart, we yield “to the enticings of the Holy Spirit,” partake of the Atonement, and become “the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters” as we are spiritually reborn (Mosiah 3:19; 5:7).

I wish to illustrate the process of acquiring truth with the mind and the heart and then suggest that living faithfully and serving with all one’s heart, might, mind, and strength are really functions of steadily enduring, of doing one’s best each day, in contrast to great bursts of energy that one tries to prolong.

## **Searching with One’s Mind and Heart**

To illustrate the first step of searching for truth through both the mind and the heart, we turn to the story of Oliver Cowdery’s desiring the gift of translation. While acting as scribe to the Prophet Joseph Smith, Oliver expressed his desire to serve as translator. Joseph took the matter to the Lord, and Oliver was granted permission. Through revelation, Oliver was told the conditions under which he



Simon Dewey

could translate and the process by which the meaning of the characters would come. If Oliver would “ask in faith, with an honest heart, believing that [he would] receive,” the Lord would confirm the thoughts of his mind and heart through the Holy Ghost (see D&C 8:1–2). The procedure for learning sacred truths outlined for Oliver is consistent with the procedures described by other prophets (see Luke 24:32; 1 Corinthians 2:9–11). Oliver would learn the translation not only through the thought processes of his mind but also through the feelings of his heart. Oliver was to study out the meaning in his mind and then ask the Lord if his thoughts were right; if a confirming burning in his bosom occurred, he would feel and know the correctness of his thoughts.

Having had little prior experience, Oliver misunderstood the process. After he failed to translate, the Lord explained that Oliver had not been diligent.

He had not tried to work out in his mind the meaning before praying for help. Instead, he asked the Lord to give him the answers (see D&C 9:7–9). Oliver had not “search[ed] diligently in the light of Christ” (Moroni 7:19). He took no thought except to ask the Lord.

Most of us are grateful that Oliver tried. The lesson he learned is now part of the record and benefits all of us. Contrast Oliver’s experience with Nephi’s preparation to understand his father’s dream of the tree of life. The preparatory process is outlined in 1 Nephi 11:1: “For it came to pass after I had desired to know the things that my father had seen, and believing that the Lord was able to make them known unto me, as I sat pondering in mine heart I was caught away in the Spirit of the Lord, yea, into an exceedingly high mountain.”

Both Oliver and Nephi desired to know truth. Both



**Oliver Cowdery learned that we receive revelation through both the mind and the heart.**



**Because Nephi spent time pondering and searching, the Lord gave him much information regarding the destiny of his people.**

believed that the Lord was able to make truth known to them. The difference was that Nephi spent time pondering and searching the meaning of the tree “in the light of Christ” until he was caught away by the Spirit. The meaning of the word *ponder*, as defined by the dictionary, is to “weigh mentally, consider carefully, . . . to think deeply about something.”<sup>1</sup> Nephi spent time thinking, weighing, and deliberating on the meaning of the dream and the tree before inquiring of the Lord. This is in contrast to Oliver, who “took no thought.” In the end, Nephi not only was shown the dream and its meaning but received much information regarding the destiny of his people.

Another wonderful example of the power inherent in connecting the heart and mind while searching for truth is related by another Nephi, who lived at the time the resurrected Savior appeared to the people in the land

Bountiful. Approximately 2,500 people were gathered near the temple, marveling at the changes associated with the three days of darkness. They were also discussing the sign given concerning the Redeemer of the world (see 3 Nephi 11:1–2; 17:25). While conversing with each other, they heard the Father’s voice introduce His Son on three separate occasions. They did not understand the voice the first two times, but they did feel the power of the Spirit piercing their hearts to the center. The Spirit was so strong that it caused their frames to quake and their hearts to burn. They knew something special was about to take place, but their minds did not grasp the meaning of the Father’s words. Moreover, the feeling in their hearts registered the importance of the message but not its content (see 3 Nephi 11:3–6).

On the third occasion, the scripture relates, the Nephites opened their ears and understood the voice, which said, “Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him” (3 Nephi 11:7). The events that follow suggest that even though they understood the words spoken on the third occasion, they did not comprehend their full meaning. They looked into the heavens and saw a Man descending, clothed in white. Upon reaching the ground, He was encircled by the Nephites, who were speechless, believing they were in the presence of an angel (see 3 Nephi 11:8). The thought processes of the mind and the spiritual witness in the heart had not yet combined to help them understand in whose presence they were.

The Savior then introduced Himself as Jesus Christ, “the light and the life of the world.” The Nephites learned He had “drunk out of that bitter cup” given to Him by the Father and had “glorified the Father in taking upon [Himself] the sins of the world” (3 Nephi 11:11). As the Savior’s words registered in their minds and hearts, awe and wonderment changed to

worship as the “multitude fell to the earth” (3 Nephi 11:12). Prior to the Savior’s introduction, the thoughts and feelings of the people were disjointed. In spite of the Son being introduced by the Father, the people were confused as to the personage descending out of the heavens. Even though the spiritual communion to their souls suggested the importance of the personage, their thoughts were not clear. The power that comes with a clear message in the mind combined with the spiritual burning in the bosom is illustrated by the change in their demeanor as they lay prostrate, knowing they were in the presence of Deity.

Searching diligently in the Light of Christ can have that same effect on each of us as we put off the natural man or woman, humble ourselves, yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, become submissive as a child, and receive the fruits of the Spirit. Like King Benjamin’s people, we too may have a mighty change of heart come to us, and we will “have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2). Spiritual rebirth requires us to “search diligently in the light of Christ” (Moroni 7:19), that we may know truth. Sacred truths come when both the heart and the mind are active participants in the process.



***The people gathered at the temple in the land Bountiful felt the power of the Spirit piercing their hearts. One by One***

Before leaving the Savior’s visit to the Nephites, we may learn another important lesson by examining the next event. The lesson concerns the way in which the Lord works with us and His desire and ability to help each person. In the 14th verse of 3 Nephi 11, Jesus invited the multitude to arise and approach Him one by one, to thrust their hands into His side and feel the print of the nails in His hands and feet. Remember, there were 2,500 people. How long would it take for each person to approach the Savior, feel the print of the nails, touch His side, and perhaps receive a brief embrace? Suppose it took 15 seconds per person.



The time required would exceed 10 hours for the multitude to fulfill the invitation.

Why did Jesus do it one by one? Would it not have been just as effective for Him to show the multitude all at once? The answer is no! Salvation is an individual process. Ordinances are conducted one by one. Every individual's faith counts.

Can you imagine the extraordinary feelings you would have felt had you been there that day? Suppose you were invited to approach the Savior, feel the wounds in His hands and feet, touch His side, and hear Him quietly say how much He loves you. That would be a spiritually transforming experience.

The invitation extended to the righteous Nephites was unusual in that the resurrected Christ was physically present. And yet each person today also has an invitation to "come unto Christ" (Moroni 10:32), to become His sons and daughters through a spiritual rebirth. In a different way, we may feel the print of the nails in His hands and feet and thrust our hand into His side by experiencing the cleansing and refining power of the Atonement. The Savior knows each of us intimately through His experience in the

***The Savior knows each of us intimately through His experience in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross. He took upon Himself our pains, afflictions, temptations, and infirmities so that He would know how to succor us.***

garden and on the cross. Alma states that He took upon Himself our pains, afflictions, temptations, sicknesses, and infirmities, that He might know how to succor us (see Alma 7:11–12). Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has pointed out that the word *succor* in old French means literally "to run to." He suggested that "even as [Christ] calls us to come to him . . . , he is unfailingly running to help us."<sup>2</sup>

When you believe in Christ strongly enough to believe that He knows and cares about you and will respond to your prayers and needs, you will lay hold on the good.

#### **"Lay Hold upon Every Good Thing"**

The second step along Mormon's path of discipleship is to "lay hold upon every good thing," to incorporate sacred truths into our lives. This involves faith, repentance, participation in sacred covenants, companionship of the

Holy Spirit, and enduring to the end. It does not mean laying hold on every good thing all at once. The principle is “line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little” (2 Nephi 28:30). Also, the command to serve God “with all your heart, might, mind and strength” (D&C 4:2) should leave one exhausted at the *end* of life, not midway through the journey. The Lord expects us to pace ourselves, to “run and not be weary, and . . . walk and not faint” (D&C 89:20).

The prophet Nephi explains what it means to serve God with all one’s heart. He states that the objective is to serve “with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception . . . , but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism . . . , then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; yea, then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost” (2 Nephi 31:13).

To serve with all one’s heart is to serve with full purpose of heart. The concern is with direction, not speed. The process allows for repentance. What counts is one’s desire and determination, not an extraordinary burst of energy. Although the Lord expects us to do our best, He is looking for steady candle power on a hill and not bright flashes in the sky that briefly illuminate but then fade.

The woman who touched Christ’s garment and was healed is a wonderful example of faith, determination, and resoluteness. Her motives were pure. There was no hypocrisy or deception, as she hoped her actions would go unnoticed. She did not want to inconvenience the Master or disturb those listening to Him. The woman had spent all her income on physicians, expecting to be cured of a blood disease, but to no avail. With great faith, this sister disciple sought out Jesus and in the midst of a crowd “came behind him, and touched the border of his garment” and was healed. Jesus experienced the withdrawal of spiritual

power. He inquired of His disciples, “Who touched me?” The disciples pointed to the multitude thronging about Him and suggested that it could be any number of persons. Jesus persisted, sensing the special person in His midst and the nature of the event. The woman then came forward. “Trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

“And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace” (see Luke 8:43–48).

The story teaches at least two lessons. One concerns Christ’s spiritual sensitivity to the individual. The other lesson concerns the depth of the woman’s faith. Because of her faith, she was healed both physically and spiritually. The phrase “thy faith hath made thee whole” often refers to a spiritual healing. It is the same phrase Christ used to bless the one leper who returned to express thanks. All 10 lepers were cleansed of leprosy, but only one was made whole—only one was cleansed from within (see Luke 17:11–19). It is also the phrase the Lord used in answering Enos’ question regarding forgiveness of sin. When the voice said, “Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed,”

Enos inquired as to how it was possible. The answer was, “Thy faith hath made thee whole” (see Enos 1:5–8). Enos’ spiritual cleansing came through faith. His faith had the power to produce humility, repentance, and a baptism of water and fire. The woman’s faith brought the same power enjoyed by Enos and the leper. Her faith produced a spiritual rebirth in addition to solving her physical problem. Her faith and determination allowed her to lay hold on two good gifts.

As mentioned earlier, the race is not necessarily to the swift but to those who endure—those who continue in the quest to lay hold on good things, those who are facing in the right direction, those still striving to eliminate a few



**The woman who touched Christ’s garment and was healed is a wonderful example of faith, determination, and resoluteness.**

discordant notes in their lives. In the 10th chapter of Moroni, the prophet states that Christ's grace is sufficient, that we will "be perfected in him" if we deny ourselves of ungodliness (v. 32). The sufficiency of the Atonement is symbolized by the 12 baskets of broken bread that remained following Christ's feeding of the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish. Jesus spoke of the infinite nature of the Atonement as He addressed the multitude on the hillside following the meal. He stated, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). The capacity of the Atonement is more than sufficient to wash our garments white, though they be as scarlet; to lift and change us from mortality to immortality, from corruptible to incorruptible beings (see Isaiah 1:18; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44). For most of us, this spiritual rebirth process stretches across a lifetime and into the next, as we are refined one step and one principle at a time.

### The Blessing of Enduring

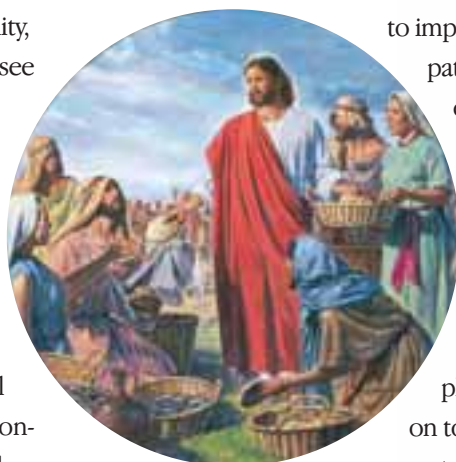
Almost 30 years ago I met a wonderful sister who, in the intervening years, demonstrated the power of enduring to the end. Her name is Virginia Cutler. She is now deceased, having passed away some years ago. Virginia and I met in West Africa during the summer of 1969. At the time, she was serving as a Fulbright Fellow at the University of Ghana, developing a home economics department for the university. I was a member of a World Bank team advising the government on economic matters. The two of us plus one other were the only members of the Church in the country at the time. We met on occasion to discuss the gospel, our common interests, and our work. Anyone acquainted with Virginia will remember her infectious personality, her wonderful laugh, her quick mind, her acceptance of all people as brothers and sisters, and her generosity.

During the summer we became good friends, and I learned

the story of her life. She was born in humble circumstances in Park City, Utah. Her family later moved to Murray, Utah, where she completed high school. She entered the University of Utah on a four-year scholarship, graduating in 1926. She taught for a short time and then married Ralph Cutler. They settled in Salt Lake County, where he farmed. Within two years of the marriage, her husband came in from the farm one day deathly ill. Within a few hours he was gone. At the time, she had one little boy and another soon to be born. It was 1931, during the depths of the Great Depression. She returned to teaching in order to provide for herself and her young family.

Within a short time, however, she had a strong desire to improve her circumstances. Not sure of the path to take, she visited with her bishop. He encouraged her in her desire to seek more education. She visited her former professors at the University of Utah. They encouraged her to apply for a scholarship at Stanford, where she was accepted and where, through a number of miracles and the help of many people, she completed her master's degree. Then she went on to Cornell, where she received her PhD. It took 15 years from the time she entered Stanford until she finished at Cornell, but it was deliberate. She managed the programs so that the two boys were an integral part of her life.

In 1946 she returned home to head the home economics department at the University of Utah. Within a few years the boys had matured, and she accepted an appointment with the U.S. State Department as an education adviser in southeast Asia, with assignments in Thailand and Indonesia. Seven years passed, and then she returned to Utah to become dean of the College of Family Living at Brigham Young University. Near the end of her career she was a Fulbright Scholar, establishing a program to train young women to become better mothers, teachers, and homemakers in West Africa.



**After Christ fed the multitude with five loaves and two fish, he declared, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."**



Toward the end of the summer, as both of us were preparing to return to the United States, she shared one regret that had occupied her thoughts for some time. For most of the years following her husband's death, she had lived in places where Latter-day Saint populations were sparse and temples did not exist. Consequently, temple worship had not been a significant factor in her life. She believed there was one more good thing she should lay

hold upon. She then told me of her plan. A new temple had been announced for Provo, Utah. She would return to her small Provo apartment, and when the temple opened she would begin serving. Her goal was to perform as many endowment ordinances as there had been weeks since receiving her first recommend as a young woman. It had been almost 50 years, and the goal was 2,500.

After we returned to the United States, our paths did not cross for another 11 years. In 1980 I was called as president of the Provo Utah Sharon East Stake. One of the first members to seek renewal of a temple recommend was my friend Virginia, a member of the stake. Following the interview, as we were reminiscing about our African odyssey, she said, "President Bateman, do you remember our conversation in which I shared my temple goals with you?"

I remembered! How could I forget?

She then said, "I have almost completed my goal. May I share with you a special experience I had in the temple recently? During one of the sessions I was thinking about the sisters for whom I had performed vicarious ordinances. I began wondering if they were aware of the work I had done. Was someone on the other side helping them? I wondered if my husband was aware of my efforts and if he was preparing the sisters to receive their blessings." She continued, "As



**Virginia Cutler performed endowment ordinances for 2,500 women—one more good thing that brought much happiness in her life.**

those thoughts passed through my mind, I suddenly knew he was there. I knew that he knew of my work and that he was assisting sisters on the other side of the veil. I was so glad to be in the temple that day. I can hardly wait to greet him and the sisters he will introduce to me."

Sister Virginia Cutler was faithful to the end. By laying hold upon one more good thing, she became a partner with her husband in the work beyond the veil. One more good thing brought much happiness to her in her later life. Today she undoubtedly counts 2,500 women among her friends. From my association with her, I confirm that she has the capacity for many more friends.

I am grateful for a Savior and Redeemer. I appreciate His teachings and the great plan of happiness. I am grateful to know that we are spirit sons and daughters of an Almighty Father and that we can become spiritually begotten sons and daughters of the resurrected Lord through diligently searching in His light and applying His truths in our lives. May each of us continue the quest for eternal life by laying "hold upon every good thing" (Moroni 7:19). ■

*From an address given May 2, 1997, at the Brigham Young University women's conference in Provo, Utah.*

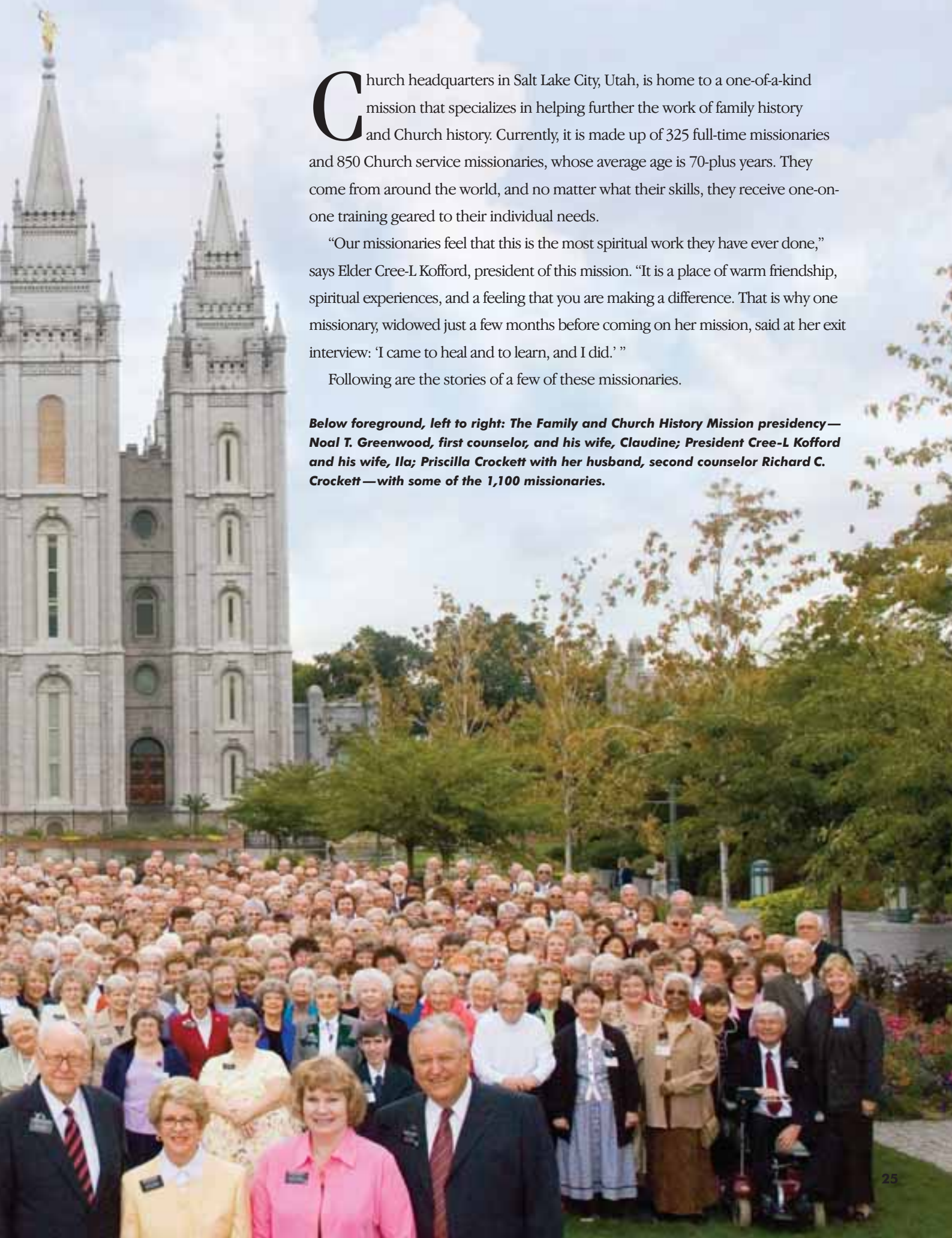
**NOTES**

1. *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (1969), s.v. "ponder."
2. "Come unto Me," *Ensign*, Apr. 1998, 22.

A large group of missionaries, including men and women of various ages, are posed for a group photo on a lawn. They are dressed in professional attire. In the background, there is a large, white, multi-story building with many windows, and to the right, a tall, ornate spire with a pointed top, characteristic of a temple. The sky is overcast.

# A UNIQUE *Mission*

*An army of missionaries  
serve in the Family and  
Church History Mission,  
and each missionary  
has a story of service  
and sacrifice.*



**C**hurch headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, is home to a one-of-a-kind mission that specializes in helping further the work of family history and Church history. Currently, it is made up of 325 full-time missionaries and 850 Church service missionaries, whose average age is 70-plus years. They come from around the world, and no matter what their skills, they receive one-on-one training geared to their individual needs.

“Our missionaries feel that this is the most spiritual work they have ever done,” says Elder Cree-L Kofford, president of this mission. “It is a place of warm friendship, spiritual experiences, and a feeling that you are making a difference. That is why one missionary, widowed just a few months before coming on her mission, said at her exit interview: ‘I came to heal and to learn, and I did.’ ”

Following are the stories of a few of these missionaries.

***Below foreground, left to right: The Family and Church History Mission presidency—Noal T. Greenwood, first counselor, and his wife, Claudine; President Cree-L Kofford and his wife, Ila; Priscilla Crockett with her husband, second counselor Richard C. Crockett—with some of the 1,100 missionaries.***



**ABOVE:** Sister Grace Chan (right) and Wendy Jyang Shamo look through a rare history handwritten in Chinese. Sister Chan has helped many patrons find their Chinese ancestors. She remembers when she was able to help an elderly Chinese gentleman from California because she had become aware of a book on the Zhao family while helping a young lady from New York four months earlier. She says of the experience: “I loaded the microfilm and turned on the reader in the late afternoon. Regardless of how busy my day has been, a calm settles on me when I am going through those names. I felt like crying when I found the ancestor of the elderly Chinese gentleman—Zhao Yufang of the Fushi village.”

Sister Chan wants older Chinese patrons to know that the library has technology that allows them to enter Chinese characters into a computer by writing the characters on a tablet. The library also has phones that allow deaf patrons to call in and receive help over a videophone.

**RIGHT:** Antonia de la Cruz (in flowered dress) of Nuevo León, Mexico, and her niece Lydia (pointing) help Jenny Suñiga Muñoz with family history. Dedicated to family history since she was a young woman, Antonia has volunteered at the Family History Library for nearly 30 years. In addition, she and her husband have researched and submitted names and helped perform temple ordinances for more than 100,000 of their ancestors.





**ABOVE:** Sister Yukiko Sakuno serves in the Family History Library and helps Japanese Americans with their research. She also translates Japanese records into English because the old *koseki* (family registry) and the old Chinese characters are complicated. “I love this work,” she says, “because it makes me feel like I am in the Elijah spirit.”

A widow, Sister Sakuno says of her husband, “Before he died he said, ‘Whether I live or not, we are going to go on a mission together.’ We felt then as if we were together in a rainstorm of love. He showed me how to live, how to die, and how to love. Now, I feel we are serving as missionaries together.”

**RIGHT:** Sister Nellie Leighton is often the first person you see when you enter the Family History Library, since she sits just inside the door to help direct visitors. On April 15, 1998, a mentally unstable man came into the library and began shooting. He shot Sister Leighton in the jaw at point blank range. She survived severe wounds, which healed without a scar. Once healed, she showed great courage by returning to her seat at the entrance of the library, where she has served ever since.

“I really feel Heavenly Father saved me so I could help encourage retired Latter-day Saints to serve missions,” she says. “Serving a senior mission is like being dipped in a big pot of love. You love those you serve with and those you work with. There is no better way to set an example for our children and grandchildren.”





**LEFT:** Dressed as Mary Jane Dilworth, Salt Lake City's first schoolteacher, Wilna Holt serves as a docent at the Museum of Church History and Art. Standing in front of the first log cabin built in the Salt Lake Valley, Sister Holt tells children how Mary Jane Dilworth taught school in a tent in the fort built when the pioneers first arrived. Sister Holt has been volunteering for 20 years.



**BELOW FAR LEFT:** Though Elder Mitchell Curtis has limited use of his fingers, he is skilled and accurate at data entry using a computer mouse. He is part of a team of missionaries that help process names for the temple. Elder Curtis contracted muscular dystrophy as a child and feared he would not be able to serve a mission, since missionaries need to be self-reliant. However, his parents have provided the needed support. Grateful for his opportunity to serve, Elder Curtis says, "No matter what your challenges are, if you have a desire to serve, the Lord will find a place for you. He will bless you to be able to do what is needed."



**ABOVE LEFT:** Missionaries provide invaluable service at the Church's family history archives located in the Granite Mountain Record vault in Little Cottonwood Canyon.

**LEFT:** Sister Claudia Shelton, who has a terminal illness, feels that her life has been prolonged so she can continue to serve as a docent in the Museum of Church History and Art.

**RIGHT:** Missionaries Gerald and Peggy Gudmundson work behind the scenes tracking art and artifacts in the archives of the Museum of Church History and Art, but their influence is far-reaching. “Seeing the artifacts of the Church teaches Church history and builds testimonies,” says Brother Gudmundson. “It overlaps into missionary work.” When the Gudmundsons started six years ago, they called their blended family of 27 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren together for a family home evening and visited the museum. “This work keeps me mentally and physically active,” says Brother Gudmundson, who is also an artist. “And it’s fun.”



**RIGHT, BELOW:** Sister Jo Clark’s missionary service includes careful repair and conservation of historical fabric items, such as shawls, silk dresses, and lace. She is shown here repairing the taffeta in a pioneer child’s dress. “I have always loved to sew,” she says. “I like to see how a dress was made, inside and out, and the beauty of the needlework. It gives me a glimpse into the past, and I can imagine how people used to live.”



**FAR RIGHT:** Whether it was repairing old cars or restoring furniture, Harold Mackelprang has worked with his hands his entire life, so he is well placed working in the conservation lab of the Museum of Church History and Art. “It’s a special place,” he says. “Handling the artifacts that belonged to Joseph Smith and other early prophets gives me respect and admiration for them. It has made me more aware of what they and the early pioneers faced.” ■



# Our Journey

BY NANCY MAY

*I had faith that our family would be blessed if I worked on improving myself instead of trying to change others.*

I love to see the temple, especially the Mesa Arizona Temple. I remember going there as a young girl with my family on Sunday afternoons and walking around the beautiful temple grounds. I always wondered what it would be like to walk through those doors and go inside. For the majority of my life, I have lived within 10 miles of the Mesa temple, yet it has taken me over 40 years to go there with my own family.

I was blessed to be raised in a Latter-day Saint home with a loving family. We held family home evening, family prayer, and scripture study, and we attended church together. But in my late teens and early 20s, I wavered in my Church activity. During this time I married a wonderful young man who was not LDS. He made me want to be a better person.

## **Motivation to Become Active**

When our first child, Bill, was born, I felt the importance of taking him to church and of teaching him about Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father, just as my parents had taught me. My husband, Don, was patient and understanding. He had been raised in a different church and was happy and content there, but he agreed to let me take our son to my church. This was a sacrifice for Don, and I have always been grateful to him for it.

A few years later I gave birth to our second son, Robert. Sadly, he was stillborn, and we were heartbroken. I knew Heavenly Father would bless our family through this difficult trial. I didn't know how or when; I just knew He would.





# to the Temple



**I** remember walking around the beautiful Mesa Arizona Temple as a young girl with my family on Sunday afternoons. I always wondered what was inside.

Because of Robert's death, I was more determined than ever to help my family become an eternal family.

## Attending Church with My Children

After Robert, we had a beautiful baby girl and then twin boys. Every Sunday I took the children to church. I knew I couldn't expect them to grow up and go on missions or marry in the temple if I didn't do my part. Don was supportive, and on occasion he came to sacrament meeting—the “main event,” as he called it—but that was all. He felt no need to change churches. I loved him and knew I had to respect his agency. But sometimes it was hard.

A hymn we sing in church says:

*Know this, that ev'ry soul is free  
To choose his life and what he'll be;  
For this eternal truth is giv'n:  
That God will force no man to heav'n.*


*He'll call, persuade, direct aright,  
And bless with wisdom, love, and light,  
In nameless ways be good and kind,  
But never force the human mind.*

(“Know This, That Every Soul Is Free,” *Hymns*, no. 240)

This became my theme song over the years. I also remembered the counsel my bishop gave me when Don and I were first married. He said I shouldn't whine, complain, or nag Don about not being a member. I didn't always follow this counsel, but I tried. So instead of trying to change Don, I decided to work on myself. I had faith that our family would be blessed if I worked on improving myself instead of those around me. I decided to work harder at following the commandments and being more Christlike in my life.

## Finding My Personal Testimony

One Sunday afternoon I came home from church feeling frustrated and discouraged. The twins were babies at that time, and when they were fussy and needed to be taken out of sacrament meeting, my other two small children would follow me out. We made quite an exodus as the five of us would get up to leave the chapel. I spent a lot of time out in the foyer thinking, “What am I doing here? I come to church, and I end up sitting in the foyer—what's the point?” I came home that Sunday, went upstairs to my room, and closed the door. I just didn't feel I could do it



**E**ventually our children grew, and church became easier. By then we had established a routine. Patterns had been set; good habits had been formed.

anymore. Church was too hard. I felt alone and out of place, and I didn't feel like I was progressing. I decided at that point that I would go inactive. I would quit my Church calling, stop being a visiting teacher, and no longer allow home teachers to visit. I wouldn't answer the phone or the door. I was through. I'm sure my husband thought I was upstairs taking a nap, but I was upstairs quitting the Church. It was just too hard.

For two full hours I was through with the Church, and then it dawned on me. I loved the gospel too much to ever leave the Church. In all my life Jesus Christ had never left my side. How could I walk away from Him? My testimony was too strong.

I thought of all the family home evenings we had when I was growing up. I'm sure my parents wondered if we were getting anything out of them, but I knew I had. All the family prayers and scripture study sessions—they made a difference. These experiences were the budding of my testimony. Sister Perry taught my Primary class when I was eight years old. She loved the New Testament stories about Jesus, and because of her I also learned to love the stories of Jesus. My testimony grew. Sister Bingham got up early every morning for four years, even when she became a widow, to teach my seminary class. She loved the Book of Mormon, and because of her, I too learned to love the

Book of Mormon. My testimony grew even more. Young Women, girls' camps, youth conferences, general conferences, Relief Society, home teachers, visiting teachers, bishops, counselors, Church leaders, and so much more—all had an influence on strengthening my testimony over the years. Now at a point in my life when I was filled with such despair, these were the experiences from which I drew my strength.

The next Sunday I was back at church with all four children. Ward members had offered to help me in the past, but I had always refused. Now I started to let them help me. I also found that I could hear the talks in the foyer if I turned up the volume on the intercom. About this time Don made more of an effort to go to the "main meeting" with me to help with the children. Eventually our children grew, and church became easier. By then we had established a routine. Patterns had been set; good habits had been formed.

#### **Feeling the Spirit**

Our oldest son, Bill, served a Spanish-speaking mission in McAllen, Texas. After his missionary service, Don and I had the opportunity to meet some of the families Bill had helped baptize. We didn't understand a word when we met them, but we felt the Spirit.

My husband's heart was touched. Ward missionaries, seeing this, invited him over to a member's home for scripture study. Every Sunday for several weeks we studied the scriptures with the ward missionaries, the full-time missionaries, and other ward members. We all felt the influence of the Spirit.

### **An Eternal Family**

On March 12, 2003, surrounded by family members and friends, my husband was baptized by our son Bill. The image of my son in the baptismal font with his father, both dressed in white, is something I will always cherish. There are no words to express the joy I felt. My children bore their testimonies to their father and expressed their love for him. It was the most beautiful baptism I have ever attended.

On March 12, 2004, our family had the opportunity to go to the Mesa Arizona Temple and finally walk

**M**arch 12 is the birthday of our dear Robert, who was stillborn. It is the day my husband was baptized by our son Bill. And it is the day our family was sealed together for eternity in the Mesa Arizona Temple.



through those doors. As we did so, I was overwhelmed with the realization of how greatly the Lord had blessed our family. Before our sealing Don and I spent a short time alone in the celestial room. Walking hand in hand, we stepped into the room and felt as if we had stepped into heaven. The feelings of serenity, joy, and peace were overwhelming. I thought to myself, "The celestial kingdom is where I want to spend eternity with my family." As we walked through the

temple halls to the sealing room, I realized that many of the people I loved most on earth were in the temple with us: my parents, all my brothers and sisters, all of our children, and close family members and friends. Don and I were sealed for time and all eternity, and then our children were sealed to us. That same day we were able to see our oldest son, Bill, married and sealed to his sweetheart, Katy.

March 12 is a very special day for us in many ways. It is the birthday of our dear Robert, who was stillborn. My saddest day has become my most joyful day.

Our journey to the temple was long and challenging at times. I experienced grief, frustration, hopelessness, and despair, and there were times when I felt like giving up. But in our journey to the temple we were never alone. We always had the Savior's influence with us. ■

*Nancy May is a member of the Foothills Ward, Tempe Arizona West Stake.*



# LESSONS

## *from Ruth and Hannah*



*Like Ruth and Hannah, all of us will experience adversity. We may not always understand the Lord's design for our lives, but it is my testimony that we are never alone.*

**BY ELAINE S. DALTON**  
Second Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency

**W**hen my mother, Emma Martin, was in her teens, her mother—my Grandmother Martin—suffered a series of strokes that left her paralyzed and unable to speak. My mother assumed her mother's role of cooking, cleaning, and caring for her father and her three brothers, along with attending school. She also cared lovingly for her mother each day.

This situation must have been very difficult, and the additional responsibilities she had to assume at such an early age must have been hard to bear. But I am told that my mother never complained and was patient and kind to her mother, father, and brothers. She did not let her circumstances discourage her or excuse her from achieving her goals and dreams. In fact, she continued to attend school and gain further education. When she graduated from high school, she was given an award for never having missed a day of school in 12 years. She had also earned the highest grades possible in all her classes.

After her graduation, my mother attended college in a city several miles away. Each

weekend she would return home to care for her mother. She would change the beds, do the washing, clean the house, and prepare meals for the week for her family,

and then return to school on Monday morning. When she met and married my father, they moved into her parents' home so that she could continue to care for her parents. I was raised in that home and still carry with me the memories of my mother's service and sacrifice. My life has been richly blessed because of her example.

Because of my mother's attitude, I always thought it was a privilege to live with my grandparents. I came to know them in a way I could never have known them otherwise. I loved my Grandmother Martin dearly, and even though she could not speak, I knew she loved me by the look in her eyes. I learned how to read on her lap. She was always there and was never too busy to listen to me. Her attitude was one of cheer and optimism. She was grateful for the smallest things. She loved it when I helped her walk around the living room, and she loved to go for a ride in the car. She blessed my life as a young child and as an adult.



**M**y mother's example of sacrifice in caring for her family has richly blessed my own life.

Both my mother and my grandmother were talented, educated, capable women. I am sure this was not what my grandmother had envisioned for her life, nor was it what my mother had in mind for her life.

#### **Opportunities in Adversity**

Life's journey sometimes takes us on unexpected paths. There are twists and turns in the road that none of us can anticipate. But with each of these twists and turns there is also opportunity—opportunity to choose our response and our plan of action. Difficulties in life can be opportunities to help us draw closer to the Savior and to trust in Him more fully. In the process of living close to Him each day, we develop Christlike attributes and qualities.

For me, my mother and grandmother are modern-day examples of the virtues and qualities that women in the scriptures developed as they exercised their dedication to the Lord.

As I study the scriptures, I am reminded again and again that the lives of many scriptural figures—in fact, the lives of most—did not go as they might have planned. How they saw their lives and how the Lord saw their lives were sometimes entirely different. In some cases He even sent angels to provide course corrections (see Mosiah 27:11–17).

I see this theme repeated in the lives of many righteous women in the scriptures. Ruth and Hannah are two scriptural women whose lives took an unexpected direction. Ruth did not expect that her husband would die, and Hannah did not expect to be unable to bear children after she was married. Each of us can be tutored as we study their lives and their reactions to the situations that presented themselves. Like my mother and grandmother, they possessed faith, hope, and charity, which enabled them to face their trials and to be instruments in the Lord's hands for achieving His purposes.



## HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions, personal reflection, or teaching the gospel in a variety of settings.

1. Ask family members to describe a difficult trial they could possibly face in the future. What would be their natural reaction? How would the Lord want them to respond? Read the first section of the article and discuss how the two women responded to their challenges.

2. Explain that the power to cope with adversity comes from applying the principles of faith, hope, and charity. Find examples in the article that show how righteous women applied these principles in responding to their trials. Testify of the rewards that come when we face our trials in the Lord's way.

### Faith

Both Ruth and Hannah had great faith. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that faith is “the first principle in revealed religion, and the foundation of all righteousness.”<sup>1</sup> And we are told in Hebrews 11 that “faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). These righteous and faithful women could not see what the future held; yet they were faithful to the Lord and to the covenants they had made.

After the death of her husband, Ruth chose to remain with her mother-in-law, Naomi. In making this decision, she gave up her family's Moabite traditions in favor of the truths of the God of Israel.

The choice to forsake family, friends, or other familiar circumstances is a difficult choice that new converts and others sometimes make because they have gained a testimony of the truths of the restored gospel and have put their trust in the Lord. Like Ruth, they exercise great faith as they make changes to align their lives to the new truths they have been taught.

Several years ago, I became acquainted with a young woman from India. She was visiting the United States and was staying in the home of a wonderful Latter-day Saint family. They taught her the gospel by the way they lived. She observed their great faith and love of the Lord and how it affected everything they did. She joined in family home evening lessons and activities every Monday night. She began to read the Book of Mormon and to attend church. She was taught the gospel and gained a testimony of its truthfulness, and she was baptized. When she joined the Church, she was in a sense doing what Ruth had done. It took courage to tell her parents and family, but she knew the Church was true and she had such great faith that she was willing to give up everything to have the blessings of the gospel in her life. She is a latter-day Ruth.

Hannah is a powerful example of faithfulness. Her petition to be blessed with a child was granted after the trial of her faith. She covenanted with the Lord that she would give her son to His service when her son was old enough, and she remained committed to her covenant. Her words reveal the depth of her faithful commitment: “For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he

shall be lent to the Lord” (1 Samuel 1:27–28).

It is interesting to note that Hannah's story begins with a cry of distress and sorrow to the Lord and ends with a song of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. We do not always have the option of choosing our situations in life, but we can respond with faith and trust in the Savior. We can know that He knows and loves us and will be with us. He has promised in the Doctrine and Covenants: “Ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along. The kingdom is yours and the blessings thereof are yours, and the riches of eternity are yours” (D&C 78:18). We can also know that when we exercise our faith, the Lord's purposes will be accomplished in His own way and in His own timing, and in the end, everything will work for our good. We can play a part in blessing future generations by exercising our faith in the Lord as we move forward through trials.

### Hope

Hannah and Ruth possessed not only great faith but also hope. We learn from Mormon as recorded in Moroni that “if a man have faith he must needs have hope; for without faith there cannot be any hope” (Moroni 7:42). When the life circumstances of these women were changed, they had hope that the Lord would provide guidance and strength.

Hannah, unable to have children, turned to the Lord in the temple and “poured out [her] soul before” Him (1 Samuel 1:15). Hannah was disappointed that her righteous desires had not been granted. However, she loved the Lord and had hope and trust in His might.

Ruth looked to the Lord with hope for her future. When she lost her husband, she experienced the feelings of loneliness that her mother-in-law, Naomi, had borne

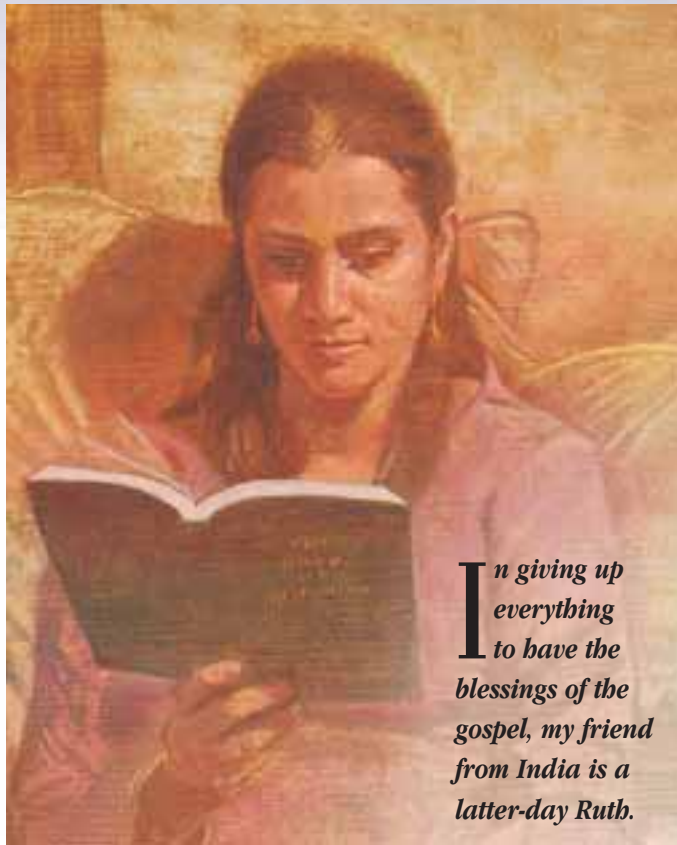
when her own husband had died. Ruth’s compassion and faithfulness to Naomi are demonstrated in some of the most beautiful words ever uttered: “Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God” (Ruth 1:16).

Ruth loved the Lord, and her faith and hope in Him were strong. Neither she nor Hannah gave up their hope. Rather, it sustained them in their trials.

### Charity

These two women possessed not only the qualities of faith and hope but also devotion and sacrifice. These Christlike qualities are among the fruits of charity. Hannah and Ruth loved the Lord, and they loved His children. They were willing to put their own desires and futures aside to do what was right. Each of these women made a commitment to the Lord based on her faith and her hope in His goodness and mercy.

Although Hannah consecrated her son, Samuel, to the Lord, she continued to demonstrate great love and dedication to him, as shown by her yearly visits to the temple: “His mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to



**I**n giving up everything to have the blessings of the gospel, my friend from India is a latter-day Ruth.

offer the yearly sacrifice” (1 Samuel 2:19).

In a small way, mothers all over the world feel what Hannah must have felt as they prepare their sons and daughters to serve missions. Hannah’s love of the Lord and love of her son are also poignant reminders of God’s love for His children.

Similarly, because of Ruth’s unselfish love and obedience to Naomi, she eventually married Boaz

and had a child named Obed. Through her lineage, the Savior was born.

### “A Full Reward Be Given Thee”

Like Ruth and Hannah, all of us will experience adversity. We may not always understand the Lord’s design for our lives, but it is my testimony that we are never alone. He is ever with us, and He promises us, “Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation” (D&C 58:3).

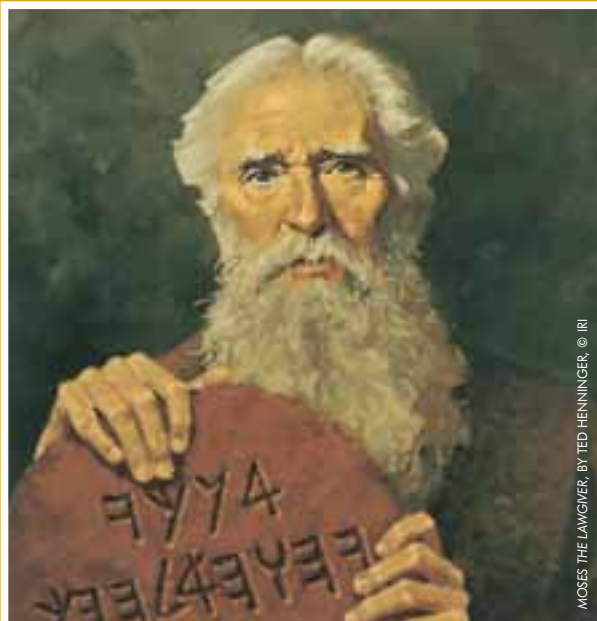
I am grateful for the pattern of faith, hope, and charity that is shown to me in the lives of righteous women in the scriptures. I am also grateful for my mother, who trusted in the Lord and leaned not unto her own understanding (see Proverbs 3:5). I believe that what was said to Ruth could be said of my mother and grandmother and the many others who navigate life’s challenges with faith and trust in the Lord: “The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord . . . under whose wings thou art come to trust” (Ruth 2:12). ■

### NOTE

1. *Lectures on Faith* (1985), 1.

# MOSES

DELIVERER AND LAW GIVER



MOSES, THE LAWGIVER, BY TED HENNINGER, © IRI

The ancient prophet Moses is best remembered for leading the children of Israel out of Egyptian captivity. He led them in the wilderness for 40 years, during which time God gave him the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. Moses was prepared in his youth to fulfill his fore-ordained mission, and during his adulthood, his character was patiently tempered in the desert.

However, he was a man who, like us, possessed both weaknesses and strengths. The key to his character was his meekness, the capacity to be molded by the Lord and His Spirit (see Numbers 12:3).

Eventually, he was called of God, assumed prophetic leadership, and became one of the most important prophets ever to live.

Elder Mark E. Petersen (1900–1984) testified: “The true Moses was one of the mightiest men of God in all time. . . .

“He walked and talked with God, received of divine glory while yet in mortality, was called a son of God, and was in the similitude of the Only Begotten.

“He saw the mysteries of the heavens and much of creation, and received laws from God beyond any other ancient man of whom we have record” (*Moses: Man of Miracles* [1977], 49).

Following is artwork that captures major events from the life of Moses. ■



**Moses Found in the Bulrushes**  
by Pharaoh's Daughter,  
by George Soper

“And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; . . . and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.

“And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him. . . .

“Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

“And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. . . .

“And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water” (Exodus 2: 5–8, 10).





BACKGROUND PHOTOGRAPH: KARNAK TEMPLE COMPLEX, EGYPT, © RICHARD CLEAVE, MAY NOT BE COPIED

© JOSEPH BRICKEY, MAY NOT BE COPIED

**Moses Seeing Jehovah, by Joseph Brickey**

“And calling upon the name of God, he beheld his glory again, . . . and he heard a voice, saying: Blessed art thou, Moses, for I, the Almighty, have chosen thee, and thou shalt be made stronger than many waters; for they shall obey thy command as if thou wert God.

“And lo, I am with thee, even unto

the end of thy days; for thou shalt deliver my people from bondage, even Israel my chosen.

“And it came to pass, . . . Moses cast his eyes and beheld the earth, yea, even all of it; and there was not a particle of it which he did not behold, discerning it by the spirit of God. . . .

“And he beheld also the inhabitants

thereof, and there was not a soul which he beheld not; . . .

“And it came to pass that Moses called upon God, saying: Tell me, I pray thee, why these things are so, and by what thou madest them?

“And behold, the glory of the Lord was upon Moses, . . . and [the Lord] talked with him face to face” (Moses 1:25–28, 30–31).



**Moses Parts the Red Sea, by Robert T. Barrett**

“And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, . . . God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea. . . .

“And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh . . . and he pursued after the children of Israel . . . and overtook them encamping by the sea. . . .

“And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. . . .

“And the Lord said unto Moses, . . . But lift thou up thy rod and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. . . .

“And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

“And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left” (Exodus 13:17–18; 14:8–9, 13, 15–16, 21–22).



**Burning Bush on Mount Sinai, by Jerry Thompson**

When Moses was grown, he slew an Egyptian who was smiting a Hebrew. When this act was discovered, Moses was afraid and fled to the land of Midian. There he married, had a son, and kept the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro [Reuel], the priest of Midian: and “he led the flock . . . to the mountain of God. . . .

“And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

“And . . . God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I” (Exodus 3:1–2, 4; see also Exodus 2:11–15; Psalm 105:26; and Acts 7:30–36).



**Above: Moses and the Brass Serpent, by Judith Mehr**

“And the people spake against God, and against Moses. . . .

“And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

“Therefore the people came to Moses. . . . And Moses prayed for the people.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live” (Numbers 21:5–8; see also 1 Nephi 17:41; Alma 33:18–20; and Helaman 8:14–15).





**Moses Calls Aaron to the Ministry, by Harry Anderson**

The Lord told Moses to bring Aaron and his sons to the tabernacle and to gather the congregation at the door.

“And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water. . . .

“And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron’s head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.

“And Moses brought Aaron’s sons . . . as the Lord commanded Moses. . . .

“So Aaron and his sons did all things which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses” (Leviticus 8:6, 12–13, 36).

**Left: Moses Breaking the Tables of the Law, by Gustave Doré**

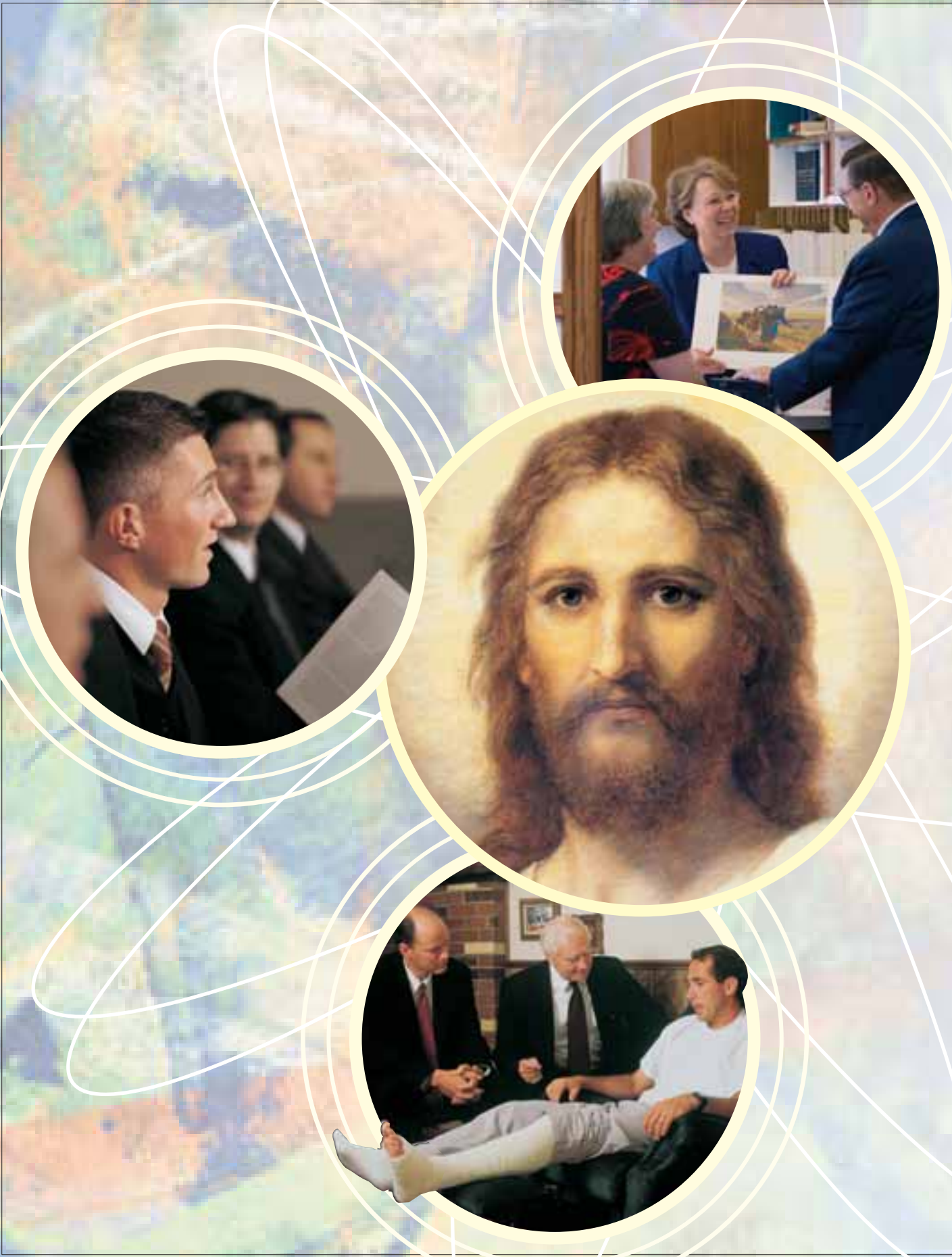
“And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses’ anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount” (Exodus 32:19).



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**The Transfiguration, by Carl Heinrich Bloch**

“Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them. . . . And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him” (Matthew 17:1–3; see also Mark 9:4–9; Luke 9:30; and D&C 63:21).



## SINGLES AND MARRIEDS

# Together in the Faith



BY KATHLEEN LUBECK PETERSON

**J**uan Fortunato of Buenos Aires, Argentina, teaches an English class for interested members of his ward. “I’ve been blessed with a strong friendship with each member of the class,” he says. “We all have something to share with each other.”

When Shirley Sun of Taipei, Taiwan, joined

a new ward, her bishop called her to teach the Gospel Essentials class in Sunday School. “I had a lot of opportunities to talk to members in the class and get to know them better,” she says.

Susan Buckles settled in Hilton Head, South Carolina, and visited the local family history library. The librarian asked Susan if she would like to volunteer there, and Susan said yes. “There is no way to measure growth unless you are actively involved,” says Susan. “Make yourself useful. Others will notice you and want you to help them.”

Who was single in these three situations? Who was married? It really doesn’t matter. What does matter is the joy that can come when fellowshipping and the love of Christ go hand in hand.

President Gordon B. Hinckley is mindful of all Saints. He has said to members who are single: “I feel some concern about the tendency in the Church to divide the members into various classes and groups. . . . You are men and women, holders of the priesthood, workers in the Relief Society. You are tremendously important to this work. The

*Whether single or married, Latter-day Saints can experience the unifying power of the Savior’s love.*



## WHAT UNIFIES US? OUR TESTIMONIES

Having encountered missionaries many times since my teens, I was, at the age of 34, blessed to see, recognize, and know the truth.

Through the years, I had always been too egotistical to believe the story of a boy, a vision, and the gold plates. Now I know through the confirmation of the Holy Ghost that Joseph Smith is a chosen prophet of God. Because of the Prophet's guileless innocence and yearning, the true Church of our living Savior has been restored. I know we can return to loving heavenly parents as we come unto Christ.

*Marianne Lipps of Sydney, Australia*

Church is much the stronger because of you.”<sup>1</sup>

All can experience the pure love of Christ regardless of age, marital status, wealth, poverty, or even celebrity. The power of this love can transform lives so that we become “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19).

### Working Together as Saints

As ward or branch members work together and show Christlike love to one another, the ward or branch family can grow closer.

Married couples and singles alike get together at the institute in Hsin Chu, Taiwan. At institute, says Jianbang Lee, “I have a chance to mingle with members besides at Sunday Church meetings. It is a wonderful occasion for members to get to know each other, share ideas, and make friends.”

Brother Lee used to think it was hard to develop friendships with other ward members. “But when I started to realize that there were many people who cared about me and loved me, the whole world seemed to change,” he says. “I started to love the ward and the members in it. I started to give more, not just waiting to receive service, love, or friendship from others.”

Kristine Amosin Cazon of Manila, Philippines, went to her new ward with a friend. A kind sister introduced them to other young single adults, the Relief Society president, and the bishop. Kristine and her friend were asked to stand during sacrament meeting. It made them feel welcome.

“When I was first welcomed in the branch, I was surprised at how loving and caring everybody was,” says Natassa Cokl of Celje,

Slovenia. “I was not used to meeting somebody once and the next time hearing them tell me they loved me. I was welcomed with outstretched arms.”

Carla Martinez, a young adult in Buenos Aires, Argentina, felt invisible in her new ward. She didn't know the members. Carla had moved many times with her family, and life was not always easy for them. But then a sister in the ward started to develop a friendship with her.

“Aldana made me a birthday cake and decorated the humble room where my parents and I lived,” says Carla. “She gave me the best present I could get—her sincere love.”

A member helped Juan Fortunato get acquainted with others in his new ward, making the transition easier. “She literally introduced me to every young person in the stake,” says Brother Fortunato. “She helped me feel part of the group, like I had a new family. She now happens to be my wife.”

### Easing the Way for Singles

Joyce Baggerly of Provo, Utah, considers herself a member of the Lord's kingdom on earth who happens to be single. “Being single in a mostly married church has never been a problem for me,” she says. “I would rather be married, but I'm not, so I do the best I can with what I have.”

When she moves into a new ward, she finds the executive secretary and requests an appointment with the bishop, and she makes sure the membership clerk requests her records.

“I introduce myself to the Relief Society president and request a visiting teaching assignment. The first fast Sunday, I bear my testimony of Jesus Christ and express how



**A**s members serve in the Church, they can look past their differences and feel a sense of belonging.

much I love the Savior. I attend every activity the ward has," she says. "On the rare occasion when I come home from a meeting where I feel ignored, I say a prayer that I might be able to go again with the same cheerful countenance I usually have on Sunday and that I can keep that smile until I am accepted."

Julie Gill of San Antonio, Texas, works to build friendships with single and married sisters. "The gospel is a great bonding force," she says. "But sometimes married people forget that all singles don't fit into the same mold, or they assume that singles can build friendships only with other singles. One sister said to me, 'You're so young,' and yet she was my same age, with two children. It's a common assumption, but we can embrace our differences to help each other."

**Called to Serve**

Courtney McGregor moved to Salt Lake City after the sudden death of his wife. To get involved, he went the extra mile. "There are always service opportunities without

being called to any particular assignment," he says. "I volunteered to help with the sacrament.

That got me talking to people I otherwise might not have met so soon. I also volunteered to help clean the temple. My experience, married or single, has been the same: friends are there to be made."

Katrina Young of San Antonio, Texas, has a similar perspective: "I have a desire to belong, so I participate in lessons, accept callings, visit teach, offer to help clean the building, give rides to members in our ward, attend activities, and try to learn the name of a family or individual each week. I have found that I am the one who is served."



## INCLUDED IN THE GOSPEL

I love young single adult activities. The Church offers us so many opportunities to become friends, date, and eventually marry. I know that Church leaders are constantly thinking of this age group, and I am grateful for their love. I know that we are not excluded because we're young or unmarried, but we are included in every aspect of the gospel.

*Holly Smith of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada*

## Watching Out for Seniors

Annelise Scott had just moved into her new ward in Irvine, California. So had several other new senior widows. Nobody really knew each other. Then two sisters in the ward planned a luncheon for others, and from that day on, these sisters have been friends, sitting together in Church meetings, celebrating birthdays, carpooling to activities, and helping each other as needed.

“We watch for new senior sisters when they first come to Relief Society, then get their names and phone numbers so we can keep them active and enjoying our little group,” says Sister Scott.

## For Those Who Are Not Outgoing

Just as some ward or branch members are outgoing, some are not. Talking to the bishop or branch president might help singles get better involved in a ward or branch.

“If you are willing to leave your comfort zone and take the initiative in making friends with singles and families in the Church, even Primary children, you’ll find that the people will love you and hold you dearly in their hearts,” says Shuwen Yang of Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

Susan Buckles attended a gathering with some Latino brothers and sisters and noticed that they had a particular way of dancing. “If someone didn’t have a partner, they included you in the dance by holding hands and dancing together in a circle,” she says. “They made differences disappear so everyone felt included.”

## Turning to the Savior

What unifies the Saints?

“The pure love of Christ makes us of the

household of God,” says Yingling Huang of Hsin Chu, Taiwan. By looking to the Savior, we can become one.

“What unifies singles with their ward or branch is the same thing that unifies all members—our testimonies of Jesus Christ,” says Roger Borg of Costa Mesa, California. “The Savior invites all to come to Him. All worthy single members may receive the blessings of the gospel, including temple blessings, and can look forward with hope to blessings, including eternal marriage, that they have not yet been able to receive in this life.”

When friendship and love come together, singles and families of all ages serve each other, look out for each other, and have “their hearts knit together in unity and in love one towards another” (Mosiah 18:21). All are blessed as a result. ■

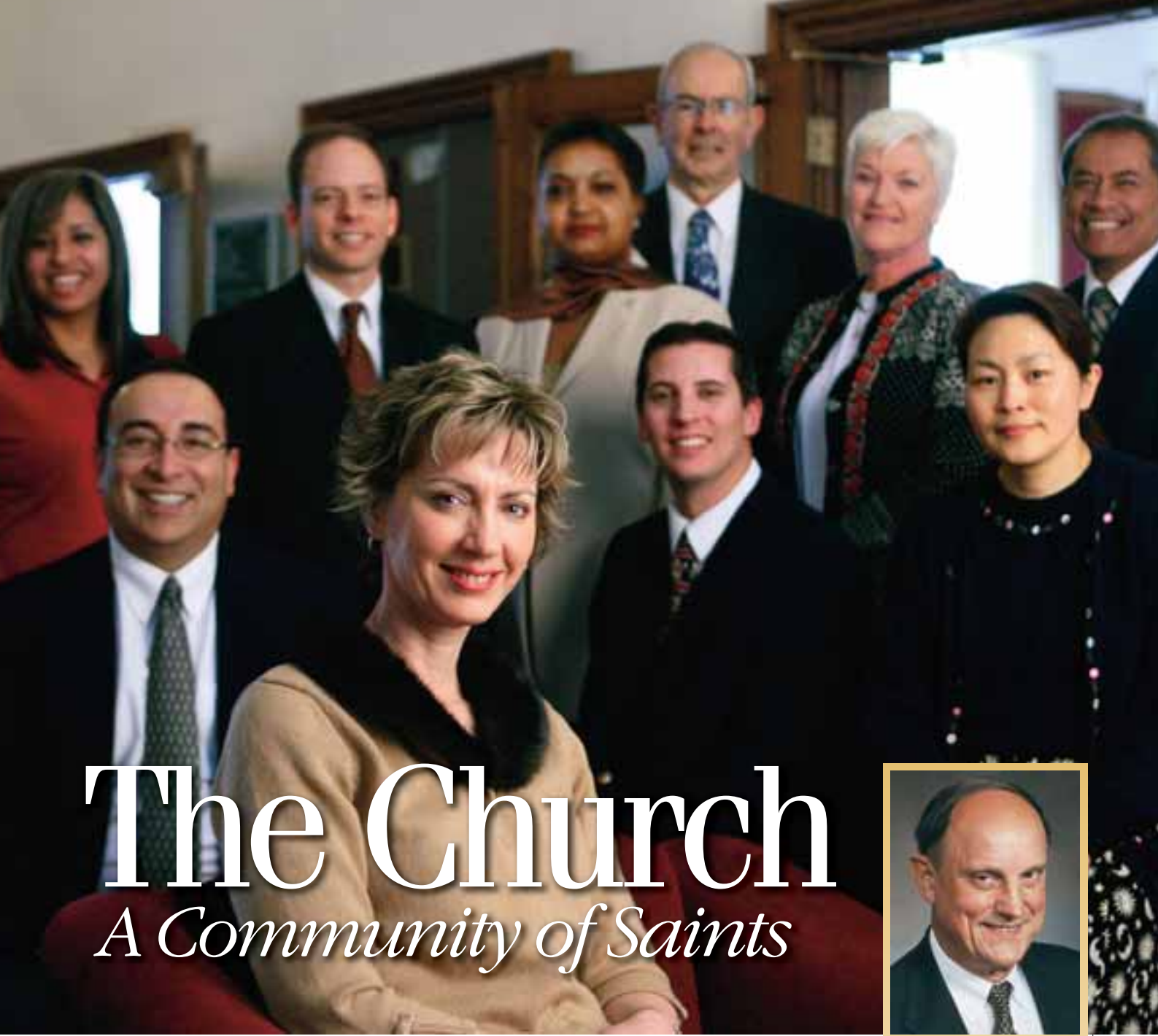
*Kathleen Lubeck Peterson is a member of the Footbill Ward, North Salt Lake Utah Stake.*

## NOTE

1. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 605.

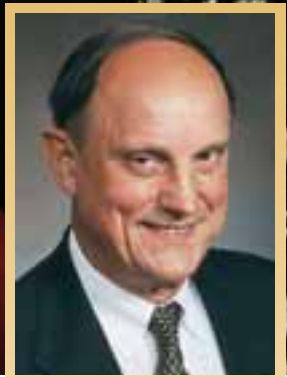






# The Church

## *A Community of Saints*



**BY ELDER CHARLES DIDIER**

*Of the Presidency of the Seventy*

**T**he beginning of the twenty-first century may be considered a time of religious transition. Throughout much of human history, people have traditionally worshipped together and have affiliated with a church or other religious organization. Today, in contrast, many consider religion to be a private matter and do not feel the need for organized religion or for any religious authority. Thus people commonly say that

they are “spiritual” rather than religious.

Interestingly, in the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord warns us about a “calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth” when “every man walketh . . . after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world” (D&C 1:17, 16). The Lord then tells us how to avoid confusion by teaching us how to recognize His true Church:

1. A prophet is called (see v. 17).
2. An everlasting covenant is established (see v. 22).

*It does make a difference whether we belong to the Church and participate in its programs.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY

***Through the Church we develop caring relationships with others—relationships that can help sustain us during difficult times.***

3. The fulness of the gospel is proclaimed (see v. 23).
4. The foundation is laid for “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth” (see v. 30).

We recognize that the Lord’s Church on the earth today is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But does it really make a difference whether we belong to the Church and participate in its programs?

### **Blessings of Church Membership**

Whenever the Lord’s Church has existed on the earth, it has been the organization to help believers bond together spiritually and socially and, by the authority of the priesthood, participate in the ordinances of salvation. The Church, which the Lord declared should bear His name (see 3 Nephi 27:7), is led by Him through the priesthood leaders He has called.

The Church blesses our lives in at least three ways. At church we develop caring relationships with others—relationships that can help sustain us during times of crisis. As we serve in callings, participate in sacred ordinances, and sacrifice, we feel needed and of worth, and we grow in charity. And as we gain knowledge about sacred things essential for our salvation, we learn what and how to worship, and we are able to have hope in the Resurrection and in the Atonement.

Do you recognize in these reasons the teachings of our prophet, President Gordon B. Hinckley? How clear are his admonitions when he states that every new member needs three things: a friend (relationships), a responsibility (feeling needed), and spiritual nourishment (knowledge).<sup>1</sup>

### **My Experience**

My own life has been greatly blessed since my family and I entered the waters of baptism in the early 1950s. We became acquainted with the missionaries when they came knocking on our door on a sunny afternoon in Belgium. We were curious to know what these young Americans were doing in our neighborhood. It was not difficult to become friends; it was more challenging to understand their message when they showed us the metal plates they had made to represent the Book of Mormon!

I was used to attending church services in a large building only a few minutes’ walk from our home. The bells would peal each Sunday to remind us that it was time to go to church. Many of my neighbors were in the congregation, but we didn’t say a word to each other during the services, and the priest did everything. My church involvement was less than an hour only once each week.

Our family soon discovered that this new church was a 40-minute walk from our home. The meetings were held in a rented house, where the dining room had been transformed into a meeting hall. Before the meeting, the adults chatted amiably and seemed to enjoy being together. The attendance at our first meeting was about 12 to 15, including the five members of our family!

The church services were so different from anything we had experienced. We easily could have decided never to come back, but instead, we decided to return. What was the motivation? We were immediately and warmly welcomed by the few members there; we observed true worship as we saw



PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND

***Serving others can help us feel needed and of worth.***

the members partake of the emblems of the sacrament in such a simple but true way; we watched as they participated in teaching, singing, praying, and administering the sacrament; and we felt the Spirit of the Lord. These things convinced us that we were among a community of true believers.

We needed to have this understanding of the Church before considering baptism. We needed to feel the support of the members, to learn from their teachings, to have the spiritual experience of living our new faith in the company of our brothers and sisters. It was not always easy after our baptism, and not everything went perfectly in every meeting we attended, but we learned to be patient and to forgive when necessary. Church was at times irreverent, edifying, humorous, enlightening, and uncomfortable. But it helped strengthen our resolution to resist the temptations of the world, to come unto Christ, and to help others do the same. Attending church became an essential part of our lives. In our branch we were able to testify together, worship together, and serve together. We were now part of the community of Saints. We felt like the Saints of ancient times, to whom the Lord said, “And ye see that I have commanded . . . that ye should come unto me, that ye might feel and see; even so shall ye do unto the world” (3 Nephi 18:25)

We resonated to the words of Moroni, who said of those who were baptized:

“And after they had been received unto baptism, and were wrought upon and cleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost, they were numbered among the people of the church of Christ; and their names were taken, that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually watchful unto prayer, relying alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and the finisher of their faith.

“And the church did meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls.

“And they did meet together oft to partake of bread and wine, in remembrance of the Lord Jesus. . . .

“And their meetings were conducted by the church after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; for as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach, or to exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done” (Moroni 6:4–6, 9).

### United in the Faith

It is not possible to be truly spiritual without being religious. The Church, the community of Saints, was established to help us become one, united in faith and in our commitment to build up the kingdom of God on earth through our personal involvement, participation, cooperation, and testimony.

As I learned and served in our tiny branch, my testimony grew, and I saw the value of each member helping a newcomer, a forgotten soul, or a repenting soul to feel welcomed, loved, and appreciated. This is, after all, the mark of the true church: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). ■

### NOTE

1. See “Converts and Young Men,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 47.

***As we gain knowledge about sacred things essential for our salvation, we learn what and how to worship, and we are able to have hope in the Resurrection and in the Atonement.***





# Courage to Follow the Lord



BY ELDER ALEXANDER A. ODUME

Area Seventy  
Africa West Area

**T**he word *courage* can be defined as the ability to be brave when one is in danger, in pain, or in a difficult situation. Life requires many kinds of courage: the courage to face facts, solve problems, accept assignments, abide by our principles, and follow through with a challenging task. The most important type of courage, however, is the courage to follow the Lord. It is this kind of courage that I would like to address.

After the death of Moses, the Lord called Joshua to lead the Israelites. He counseled Joshua to “be strong and of a good courage” (Joshua 1:9; see also v. 6). The Lord knew the magnitude of Joshua’s assignment and the stubbornness of the Israelites, who so often failed to keep His commandments. He knew that without courage, or faith to follow the Lord, Joshua would not be able to fulfill his calling and endure the hard times ahead of him.

So it is with us as we become members of the Lord’s Church. Soon after baptism—or perhaps even as we are investigating the gospel—we may be faced with opposition from others. Our friends and loved ones may

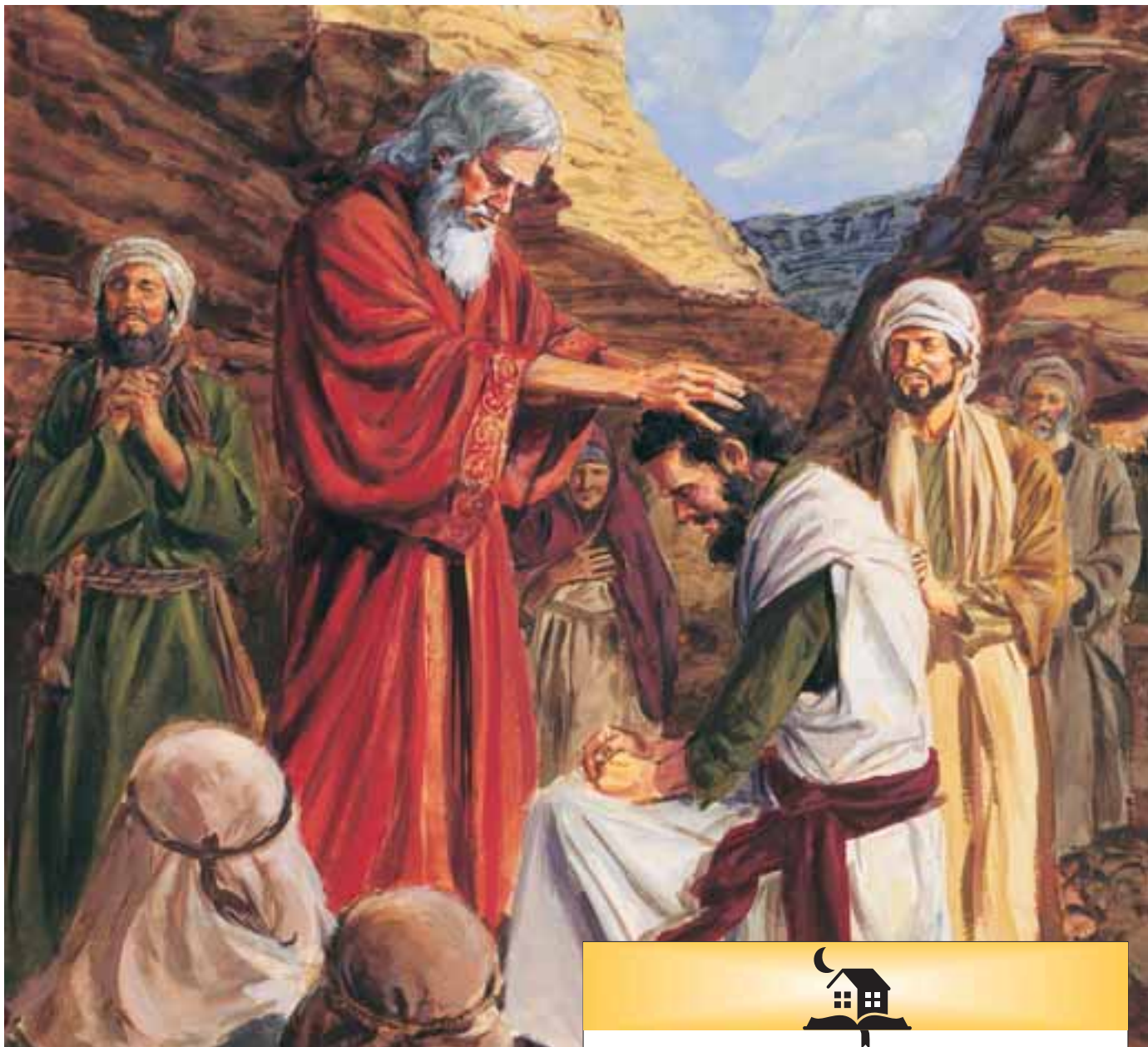
abandon us, and our difficulties may even be extended to the workplace.

Never shall I forget my own experience after baptism. My family members and friends rejected me, claiming I had joined a cult. At work, I was treated badly and denied promotions and other privileges simply because of my membership in the Church. However, these difficulties did not diminish my conviction that, as a member of the only true church, I had embarked upon a good cause. My wife and I were determined to press forward despite all our troubles and persecutions. As we have continued to do so, the Lord has guided and blessed us, even though the road has been rough.

Life is full of growing experiences that teach us how to overcome opposition, weaknesses, and fear. Let us rejoice in the knowledge that as we stand with courage through our trials, the Lord will not leave us without guidance. He has given us the Holy Ghost to be our companion to abide with us (see John 14:16).

The Apostle Paul is a powerful example of courage. He labored fearlessly, he delivered a divine message, he resisted enemies; and for all this he was taken prisoner and subjected to humiliations by the administrators of the

*Let us rejoice in the knowledge that as we stand with courage through our trials, the Lord will not leave us without guidance.*



***Joshua—ordained by Moses—needed faith to follow the Lord in order to fulfill his calling and endure the hard times ahead.***

law. Yet he maintained his courage and faith to the end, declaring, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. . . . For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:8–9, 17).

May we too have the courage to follow the Lord even when faced with opposition. I testify that as we do so, the love of Christ will increase in our hearts, and we will be further strengthened to stand steadfast in the cause of truth. ■



## HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions, personal reflection, or teaching the gospel in a variety of settings.

1. Use the information in the article and scriptures to have family members role-play the stories of Joshua and Paul. Ask what happened when they acted courageously. Share stories from your own life that testify of how the Lord has guided you as you have demonstrated the courage to follow him.

2. Read the definition of *courage* as found in the article. Have family members share a time when they acted courageously. Conclude with the italicized quotation on how we can “stand with courage through our trials.”

# The Proclamation

## A Guide, a Comfort, and an Inspiration

BY E. JEFFREY HILL

Associate Professor of Family Life, Brigham Young University

*In the general Relief Society meeting in September 1995, President Gordon B. Hinckley read a document prepared by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Before reading “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” President Hinckley explained: “The world we are in is a world of turmoil, of shifting values. Shrieking voices call out for one thing or another in betrayal of time-tested standards of behavior. . . . With so much of deception concerning standards and values, with so much of allurements and enticement to take on the slow stain of the world, we have felt to warn and forewarn” (“Stand Strong against the Wiles of the World,” Ensign, Nov. 1995, 99–100). This proclamation has proven prophetic in the years since it was written, as values continue to shift and morals to decay. This article illustrates how the principles in the proclamation can help families achieve peace and happiness even during times of adversity.*

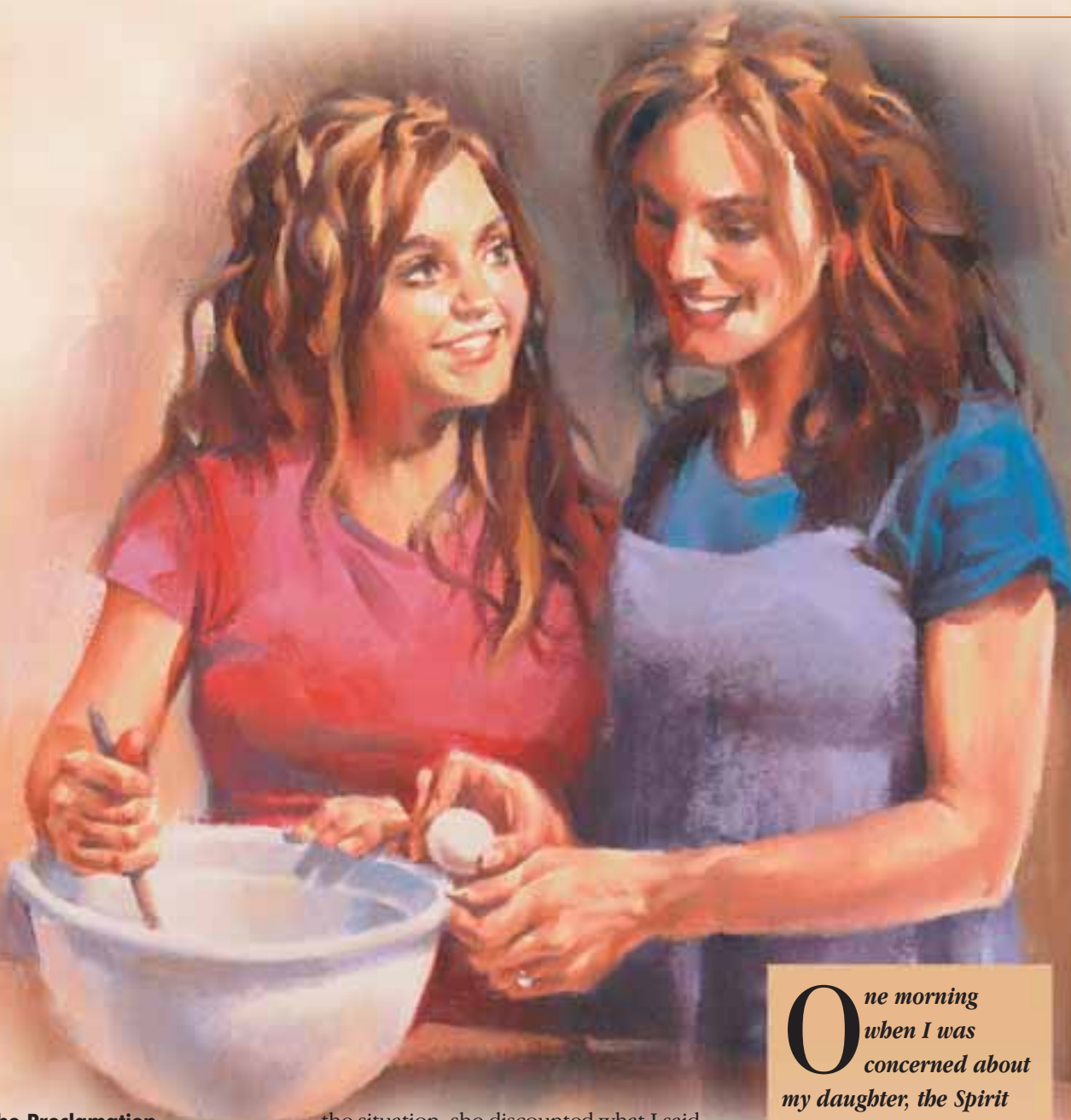
September 23, 1995, was a life-changing day for me. My calling on the stake high council required that I attend the broadcast of the general Relief Society meeting. President Gordon B. Hinckley spoke, and for the first time I heard the words of “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”

Immediately a growing brightness illuminated my mind and heart. I listened with rapt attention. I had just completed a PhD in family studies, but now I heard in five minutes more pure truth about the family than I had gleaned in nearly five years of graduate study. I wanted to stand up and applaud. As President Hinckley concluded, I felt a great desire to apply these principles in my family and share them with the world.

In the days that followed, I thought constantly about the proclamation. When the conference magazine finally came, I

read the proclamation over and over again. I pondered and prayed. I wanted to so thoroughly digest its words that they would become an indelible part of my being. That’s when I felt impressed to memorize the proclamation. It would not be easy. I was in my mid-40s, and memorizing was not nearly as easy as it once had been. But again and again I felt the prompting: “Memorize the proclamation. Memorize the proclamation! MEMORIZE THE PROCLAMATION!”

I took a copy of the proclamation with me wherever I went. I memorized while shaving. I memorized while walking to the university. I memorized while exercising. The last words on my mind before retiring and the first words in my mind upon arising were the words of the proclamation. No miracle aided my memorizing, and my progress was painstakingly slow. But after about a month I could repeat the whole proclamation.



### Applying the Proclamation

Now that I had it, I wanted to keep it. So I would recite the proclamation several times each day during morning exercise and stretching. As I did, it seemed as if the Spirit highlighted certain words or sentences. I would linger on these passages, and they, in turn, would prompt impressions that would bless my family and me.

For example, the next summer I was concerned about the friends my teenage daughter was spending so much time with. But when I tried to talk to her about

the situation, she discounted what I said and became more distant. While I was jogging and thinking about the proclamation one morning, the Spirit highlighted in my thoughts the last sentence in paragraph seven: *“Extended families should lend support when needed.”* I slowed the pace of my jog, and an image of my younger sister came into my mind. This sister had experienced many trials in her life and was now nearly full term with her seventh pregnancy. The impression I had was that we, as extended family, should lend her support right now. So I bought a plane

**O**ne morning when I was concerned about my daughter, the Spirit highlighted a sentence in the proclamation: *“Extended families should lend support when needed.”* I was impressed that I needed to send my daughter to help my sister during her pregnancy.



**T**he proclamation inspired my wife, Juanita, and me to begin holding a family testimony meeting on fast Sunday after church.

ticket for my daughter and asked her to spend a week serving in my sister's home.

In this distant place an interesting thing happened. During the day my daughter found joy serving my sister's family. And after the children were asleep, she and my sister had many long talks. My sister was able to talk to my daughter in a way that I had been unable to. She told her how decisions she had made as a teenager had produced a lifetime of challenges. When my daughter returned home, something had changed in her. She began making choices that blessed her life. My sister, her family, my daughter, and I were all blessed by this trip, which was prompted by the words of the proclamation.

Another time the words "*Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs*" weighed heavily on my mind. Our family members loved and had a good time with each other, but I felt that we were far from our spiritual potential. The words of the proclamation inspired my wife, Juanita, and me to begin having a family testimony meeting on fast Sunday after church. Unfortunately, our first attempt did little to provide for our children's spiritual needs. None of them really wanted to be there. Several children complained about how hungry they were, and our youngest asked several times, "When is this going to be over?" Still, we persevered, and after a few months the complaining stopped and we started feeling the Spirit more. This family testimony meeting became a precious time to share sacred truths and to help us "*rear [our] children in love and righteousness.*"

A pattern was emerging. As I frequently reviewed the words of the proclamation, they formed a conduit through which the Spirit could give my wife and me inspiration to move our family forward. True, most of the inspiration was not as grand as these examples. Most of it came as ideas like "Take Hannah on a daddy-daughter date," or "Fix dinner for Juanita tonight," or "Listen more to Emily," or "Put Seth to bed more often." But the hundreds of little bits of direction added up to a much better family life.

#### **Comfort in Adversity**

In 2001 Juanita was diagnosed with advanced breast cancer and was given a 50 percent chance for five-year survival. Our best option was to pursue an aggressive but very taxing



course of chemotherapy, surgery, and radiation. We were discouraged when after eight weeks of nauseating chemo the large tumor had not shrunk at all. During this trial I went jogging and recited the proclamation as loud as I could to relieve the stress I was feeling. It comforted me.

On one jog when I got to “*Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer,*” I stopped. I felt a sense of peace as an impression formed in my mind. It was the Saturday morning before fast Sunday, and I felt inspired to send an e-mail to everyone I knew, inviting them to fast and pray and exercise their faith for Juanita so that the chemotherapy would be effective. We received a great outpouring of support. Even friends of other faiths described powerful experiences with fasting and prayer. Without our asking them to do so, friends in Australia, Japan, Hawaii, Salt Lake, Boston, Belgium, and South Africa put Juanita’s name on the prayer roll in their temples. The results were miraculous. Immediately our mood and our faith improved. And during the next four weeks of treatments, the tumor almost totally disappeared. Juanita finished the treatment, and no measurable cancer remained. We were so grateful! But this wasn’t the end of our trials or of the continued comfort the proclamation brought us.

In early 2004 we were devastated to learn that Juanita’s cancer had returned, this time in her lungs. In somber tones our doctor told us he would try to keep the cancer under control as long as possible, but there was now no possible cure. At first I felt betrayed and hopeless. Juanita and I had righteous desires and plans. What about the missions we were going to serve together? What about the grandchildren we were going to strengthen spiritually? How could this happen to us?

As I went through the proclamation again, this time it was as if someone turned a flashlight on to highlight the words “*Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of*

*matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother.*” I recognized my children were entitled to be raised by a father *and a mother*. This statement filled me with hope that in the face of very large medical odds Juanita would be blessed with a miracle and be healed.

### **A Change of Focus**

We lived a fairly normal and hopeful life for about six months, but then the cancer began to take its unmistakable toll. Juanita lost weight rapidly and acquired a nearly constant and uncomfortable cough. Even the smallest exertion left her struggling for breath. Things seemed always to get worse and never better. Soon it became apparent that it was not God’s will for Juanita to live very much longer. I was at a complete loss to explain why God had not stepped forward with the miracle we so badly needed and so sincerely hoped for. But then again the words of the proclamation provided inspiration and comfort: “*Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to*

*return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally.*” Through many tears my understanding was enlarged to see that Juanita would indeed receive a miraculous healing. Because of the plan of salvation, Juanita would pass from this life into a beautiful place to be greeted by her father, our daughter who had passed away, and the Savior. Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, Juanita would be healed and at the Resurrection receive a perfect body, free from cancer and any other illness. I could also see that through all eternity our children would have access to her influence as their mother—another miracle.

I also felt impressed that there was much we could yet do in this life to give the children continued access to her wisdom. I received a clear impression that it was time for us to stop focusing our faith on a physical miracle that was not in keeping with God’s will and focus instead on

“*Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs.*”

learning as much as we could from Juanita in the short time we had left. We needed to be better prepared “to return to the presence of God and for [our family] to be united eternally.” In our family testimony meeting we

expressed these feelings poignantly, and their truth washed over us all. Then we went to work.

Juanita wrote her testimony of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, and I wrote mine as well. We printed and laminated them along with our pictures in a size that would fit in the children’s scriptures. Juanita then wrote long letters in her own hand to each of the children, expressing appreciation and offering words of encouragement and advice. We recorded Juanita’s sweet voice singing hymns, Primary songs, and childhood lullabies and made CDs for each of the children and for future grandchildren. We also recorded messages to be listened to on special occasions such as going to the temple, leaving on a mission, getting married, giving birth to a child. Juanita crocheted baby blankets and bibs for future grandchildren. Our lives now became focused, full of activity, and we received great comfort from the Spirit. All this came as a result of inspiration from the proclamation.

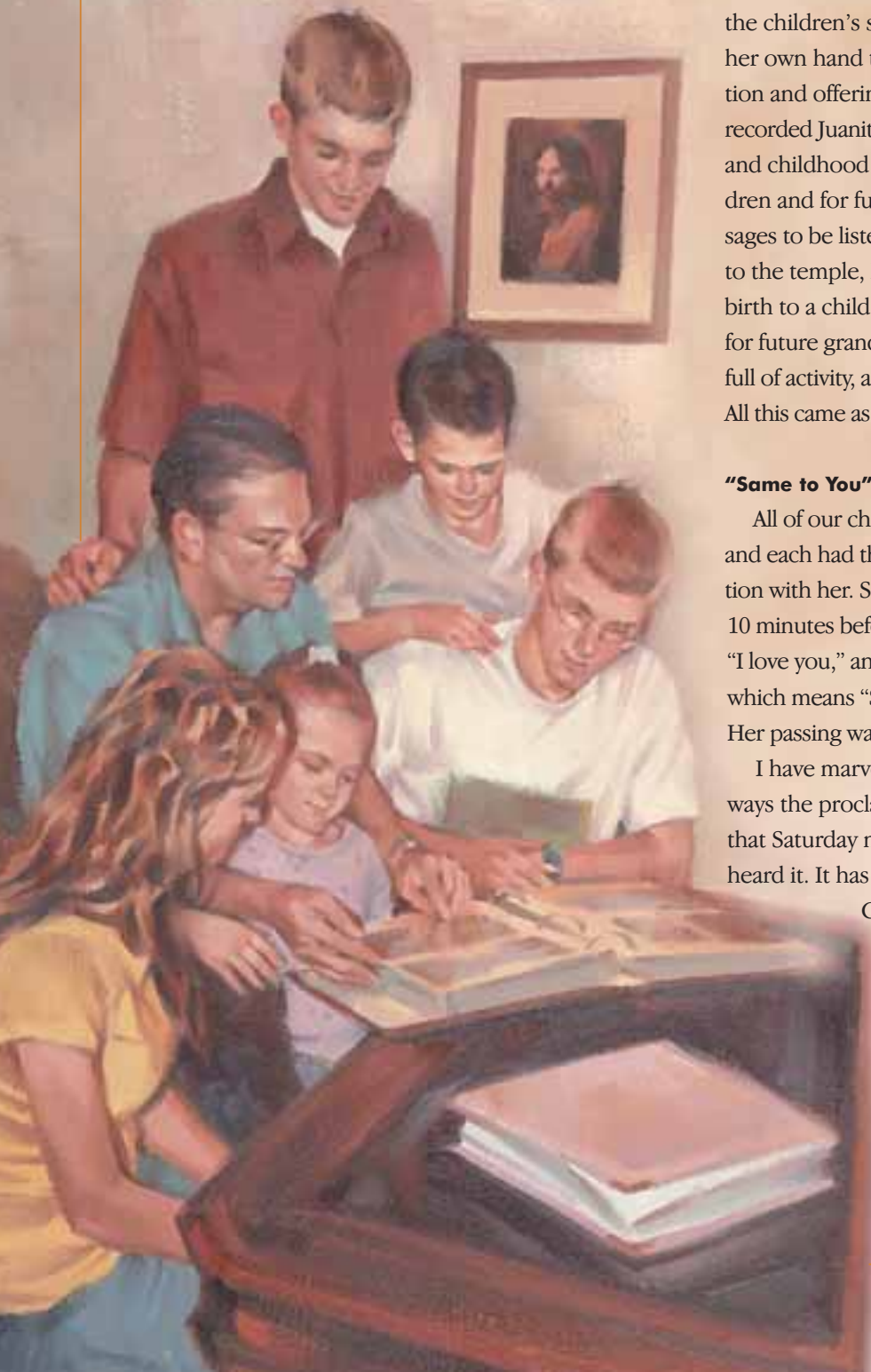
#### “Same to You”

All of our children were at Juanita’s side when she died, and each had the opportunity to share tender communication with her. She was alert and talked to us until about 10 minutes before she passed away. That’s when I told her, “I love you,” and she responded in Spanish, “Lo mismo,” which means “Same to you.” Those were her last words. Her passing was sweet.

I have marveled at the numerous specific and personal ways the proclamation has blessed me and my family since that Saturday night more than a decade ago when I first heard it. It has changed our lives forever. It is the word of

God, and it can be the basis for great joy and happiness in family life, even in the midst of unfathomable trials. I know by the Spirit that “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” is an inspired document for families today, and if seriously studied, it will open the windows of divine assistance for our families. ■

*E. Jeffrey Hill is a member of the Canyon View Fifth Ward, Orem Utah Canyon View Stake.*



# Two Toddlers Underfoot

BY IDA L. EWING

**A**t the end of a particularly unproductive day, I found myself feeling exasperated at my inability to get anything done with two toddlers constantly underfoot. I decided to call my older sister, Treisa, for some advice. She has three active boys, yet she remains cheerful and calm. Treisa commiserated with me and said my struggles brought to mind an experience she had had shortly after moving from their small trailer.

Treisa had expected that after the move into a larger home, her children would build toy castles somewhere other than in front of the kitchen sink and would no longer need to use the pile of laundry she was folding as the base for their hide-and-seek games. Somehow, though, that change never occurred—her children continued to exist in a sort of holding pattern around her legs. But, she told me, one day she came across a passage of scripture in Mark 10:13–14, 16 that helped her overcome her frustrations.

After our conversation I read:

“And they brought young children to

him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

“But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. . . .

“And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.”

I noticed that just before this incident with the children, Christ was challenged by the Pharisees. He easily could have felt tired or irritable, yet He welcomed the children, picked them up, and blessed them.


I pondered this selfless act of love, focusing on what it could mean for me as a mother. I realized that too often I pushed my children away. But if I follow Christ’s example, then

even when the laundry and dishes are piling up, the bills need to be paid, and I’ve had too little sleep, I can stop, take my children in my arms, and love them.

Perhaps this was what my sister was trying to tell me—when your children are in your arms, they are no longer underfoot. ■

*Ida L. Ewing is a member of the Crestview Ward, Fort Walton Beach Florida Stake.*





# Finding What Was LOST

*As I rejoiced in helping to find my lost ancestors, I mourned over being unable to help my lost daughter.*

BY MARIE SANCHEZ

I peered diligently at the microfilm of church records and read name after name of my ancestors from northern Spain, written generations ago in elegant Spanish penmanship. These families had lived in peace in their little fishing village for centuries. They loved the Lord and one another. Their village was nestled on a little coastal inlet and surrounded by rolling hills of eucalyptus trees, a setting that provided a serene and quiet sanctuary for their families. Few were ever drawn away from its simple beauty and warmth of spirit. Most were related to one another by blood or marriage.

These records had special meaning to me—my grandfather Andres Sanchez had



saved them from destruction during the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s. I grew up knowing his story, but my connection with it became evident only as I began my search for the records. Although I never knew my grandfather, I felt his spirit as I read these names and dates.

Together we had become a team that made it possible to provide temple ordinances for more than 10,000 of our ancestors.

This day, however, like most days of the last few years, was also filled with pain and sorrow over my daughter and the direction her life was going. I cried out in the depths of despair to my Heavenly Father, pleading for His help in my daughter's behalf against odds that seemed impossible. My heart was filled with emotion—though I was working faithfully to provide saving temple ordinances for my ancestors, I could do little to save my own child. Then I felt the strength of past generations joining with me in an effort to save my daughter, and I found a measure of peace at the microfilm reader as I lost myself in extracting the precious names and dates from church records.

#### **A Choice with Conviction**

Andres had been a good man and a leader in his village. He was the father of five. Though not a wealthy man, he had a good trucking business and was considered a man of means.

But his was a turbulent time in the history of Spain. The Spanish Civil War brought starvation and destruction to much of the nation. Politics became the most common topic of discussion among the people. In all other periods

in the history of Europe, this quiet village had been spared from the ravages of war, even during World War I. But now the enemy was coming. Andres named his new baby Libertia as an outward expression of his convictions.

Everywhere the invaders burned the churches and killed the church leaders in an effort to stifle opposition. In defiance, Andres and a few of his good neighbors secreted away the sacred artifacts and records from the little village church. He did this knowing that the consequences could be devastating for himself and his family. He made a choice and stood by that choice with conviction.

Eventually the enemy came to his village. The name of Andres Sanchez was discovered, and he was dragged into custody. As a result of his actions at the little village church, he met a fate of torture and deprivation. Andres's business and property were confiscated and his family left destitute as beggars. Andres's health weakened under the deplorable prison conditions, and after a short while he contracted tuberculosis. He was released to his family two weeks prior to his death.

**M**y grandfather  
*Andres Sanchez helped save the family records from the village church during the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s.*

### **A Willing Sacrifice**

The Lord did not forget the efforts of one man and a handful of brave friends who loved Him and sacrificed their very lives for these records. Years later the records were microfilmed by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Now I sat in a large dim room in the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, reading a copy of that microfilm. As I proceeded with the tedious task of searching through names so foreign to me, I was drawn to these people. A feeling of family unity grew in my mind and heart.

My husband and I drew inspiration, courage, and hope from the example of my grandfather, who willingly sacrificed for future generations. In turn, we felt the strength of past generations joining with us in our efforts to help our daughter.

It was in March 1999, the same week President Gordon B. Hinckley dedicated the Madrid Spain Temple, that I submitted my first 6,000 family names to the temple file in the Bountiful Utah Temple, as complete as possible and within their proper families. Now my next 4,000 names were ready. The names of an entire community of people were available at the temple for their temple ordinances to be performed. The work of salvation for a faithful little Spanish village had begun.

### **A Double Celebration**

As temple ordinances were performed for my ancestors, it seemed to my husband and me that the heavens were weeping and praying with us in our daughter's behalf. In time our daughter realized that she needed to change her life and rediscover the peace that had been missing for so long. She began the arduous process of repentance, and gradually we saw the light enter her countenance again. At long last, our heartfelt, pleading prayers were being answered. She enjoyed the healing intervention of a loving Heavenly Father, who is mindful of all of His children.

On a beautiful evening, I sat in the Bountiful temple, my eyes wet with tears of joy. Beside me was my daughter, there to receive her own endowment and to be sealed to a worthy young man.

But the story does not end there. As family and friends gathered to participate in this glorious event, the sister at the desk handed out the proxy names to those attending the session. By coincidence, the names she gave us were some of the same names I had submitted to the temple file. Indeed, it was a double celebration—we rejoiced as we served as proxies for our Spanish ancestors, and in turn they must have rejoiced with us as our daughter was sealed to her husband for time and all eternity in the house of the Lord. In that moment, we could feel the circle of eternal family uniting the past and the present.

We were one. ■

**I**n the temple we rejoiced as we served as proxies for our Spanish ancestors and rejoiced also for our daughter, who had returned to the gospel.



# I NEEDED TO KNOW

BY ANNE ROQUEMORE

*As a missionary, I found myself seeking the very comfort I was teaching people about.*

**I** sat at the piano, listless. My shoulders drooped as my eyes scanned the black and white keys. Usually music was my therapy. Angry, sad, or happy, I'd sit at a piano and play tunes that would lift my heart. But not tonight.

The entire day I had been lost in a numb stupor, going through the motions of the missionary work I had been called to perform in the Wisconsin Milwaukee Mission. My companion and I would strike up conversations with people on the streets or in their yards; we'd speak of Heavenly Father's plan, of who we are, where we came from, where we are going after this life, and of Jesus Christ's role in that plan. But try as I might, I couldn't concentrate on the words. How could I focus on what was right in front of me when my heart was thousands of miles away in an operating room with my dad, who was undergoing yet another heart bypass surgery?

Finally, my companion and I had gone to Relief Society homemaking meeting (now known as home, family, and personal enrichment) at the meetinghouse on the outskirts of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin. I tried to focus on the lesson; I even made a comment or two. After a while, though, we excused ourselves and quietly made our way to the chapel.

I went to the piano and played favorites from the hymnbook and the *Children's Songbook*, but listless fingers stroking smooth ivory were not enough to break the somber mood I had fallen into. I couldn't explain it. My dad had gone through surgeries before; he was strong, vibrant, with a wide, bright smile. Mom had said this surgery would be routine—well, as routine as cutting into a man's heart could be. Why, then, did I feel so out of sorts?

Again I pressed upon the piano keys, aching for some solace from the notes. Tears came to my eyes. I quickly brushed them away, chiding myself for this foolishness. I had always been overly dramatic. This was just more proof. Everything was fine.

I glanced at the clock. Dad's surgery should be finished. My mission president had given me permission to call home. Mom would tell me that everything was OK, that Dad was OK.

We returned to our apartment, and I went straight to the phone and dialed my home in Brighton, Colorado. I waited for the ringing to stop. I didn't expect the voice that answered—a deep voice I recognized as Bishop Gormley's. Something clutched at my throat, suffocated my next words. I asked if Mom was home. There was a pause; I heard Bishop Gormley's deep voice in the background. Then I heard my mother sob.

Miles from home, from family, in my apartment in Wisconsin, I fell to my knees when Mom came on the line. Somehow



I knew. She didn't have to say the words, but she did anyway. Dad had died. He wouldn't be waiting at the airport when I flew home in three short months. I wouldn't be greeted by his smile.

Sobs came in painful gasps. My companion did her best to console me as I cried into the phone. She cried with me—the best thing to do when words will bring no comfort. All I could say over

and over was, "I love you, Mom."

I had been raised in the gospel. My parents had been converted before I was born. Missionaries had knocked on Mom's door. Dad was serving overseas in the Marine Corps. She wrote him about the Book of Mormon and what the missionaries were teaching and encouraged him to seek out the missionaries himself. He did, and when he started reading the Book of

Mormon he knew almost instantly it was true. He was baptized two weeks before Mom was. Ever since then, the gospel had been taught in our home. Mom and Dad had taught us about the plan of salvation. Each of us had a testimony of Jesus Christ. We had grown to love the Book of Mormon. And we had all been raised to be prayerful—to believe in a loving Father in Heaven to whom we could go in our greatest need as well as when everything was going well. But never in my life had I prayed as fervently as I did that night.

How ironic that I had volunteered to travel to Wisconsin to teach anyone who would listen that there was a purpose

**I went straight to the phone and dialed my home. I didn't expect the voice that answered—a deep voice I recognized as Bishop Gormley's.**



to life, to let them know that because of the Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ death wasn't to be feared, because it wasn't the end. But there I was, seeking the very comfort I was teaching people about. I needed to know—not just believe—that my dad still lived. It's one thing to believe in something, to feel in your heart that it's right and true; it's quite another when that faith is tested and tempered by trial.

So in the darkness of my room, while my companion frantically called our local mission leaders to get them to come to our apartment, I knelt and entreated Heavenly Father for some kind of comfort.

Many people in the world today are skeptical that prayers are actually answered. Some wonder if you've been brainwashed to have faith in a real and living God. Others just nod politely and tell you, "That's nice." As for me, I know He answers prayers. I knew it before I entered the mission field, but that night, kneeling alone by my bedside, that knowledge became even more real to me. After a day of confusing stupor, after a heartbreaking conversation with my mother, amid all the agony I was suffering, the moment I spoke the words "Dear Heavenly Father," peace enveloped me, my pounding heart stilled, my breathing calmed.

In that instant, I knew that Father in Heaven loved me. On a lonely planet in a vast galaxy among countless other galaxies, a tiny, suffering voice was heard and solace was given.

People have wondered since that night in early January



1990 why I didn't go home for Dad's funeral, why I stayed and finished my mission. Considering the lengthy mourning process I endured after my mission officially ended, I've had my own moments of doubt about that decision. But then I remember that I had gone to Wisconsin to give people a message of hope. In the beginning, it had been a message delivered by a young woman who had faith that it was

true. But how could I possibly have left my task behind when I *knew* it was true?

Dad would understand. He was a great believer in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. My family learned later that the night before Dad died, he had been a missionary as well, discussing the gospel and the Book of Mormon with his hospital roommate who was seeking answers to the often chaotic riddle of life. That made me smile because for a brief moment my dad and I had been missionaries together.

Separated by miles, true, but nonetheless connected.

Today there are still moments when I sit at my piano and recall the night I sat at another piano in a distant chapel in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, seeking solace for some sadness I couldn't name. I remember Dad and wonder what he's up to because, thanks to the Atonement of Jesus Christ, I know Dad still lives. Then I play and let the music wash over me and enter my heart, thanking Heavenly Father for the symphony of truth He restored to this world. ■

*Anne Roquemore is a member of the Terrace Heights Ward, Selah Washington Stake.*

## Emphasizing the Divine Worth of Each Sister



*Prayerfully select and read from this message the scriptures and teachings that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Share your experiences and testimony. Invite those you teach to do the same.*

**Blessings of Belonging to Relief Society:** Relief Society helps each sister learn that she is a beloved spirit daughter of Heavenly Father, that she has a divine nature, and that she has the potential to inherit eternal life.

### What Do We Know about Our Divine Nature?

**The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:** “All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. . . . In the premortal realm, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshiped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize his or her divine destiny as an heir of eternal life” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

**Bonnie D. Parkin, Relief Society general president:** “Relief Society has renewed, strengthened, and

committed me to be a better wife and mother and daughter of God. My heart has been enlarged with gospel understanding and with love of the Savior and what He’s done for me” (“How Has Relief Society Blessed Your Life?” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 35).

**Romans 8:16–17:** “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.”

**President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985):** “Relief Society leaders and teachers should ask, how can we help the wife and mother understand the dignity and worth of her role in the divine process of motherhood? How can we help her make her home a place of love and learning, a place of refuge and refinement? . . . Our success, individually and as a Church, will largely be determined by how faithfully we focus on living the gospel in the home” (“Living the Gospel in the Home,” *Ensign*, May 1978, 101).

### How Can Understanding Our Divine Nature Change Our Attitudes and Actions?

**President Gordon B. Hinckley:** “There is something of divinity within each of you. You have such tremendous potential with that quality as a

part of your inherited nature. Every one of you was endowed by your Father in Heaven with a tremendous capacity to do good in the world. Train your minds and your hands that you may be equipped to serve well in the society of which you are a part. Cultivate the art of being kind, of being thoughtful, of being helpful. Refine within you the quality of mercy which comes as a part of the divine attributes you have inherited” (“The Light within You,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 99).

**President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency:** “A conviction that you are a daughter of God gives you a feeling of comfort in your self-worth. It means that you can find strength in the balm of Christ. It will help you meet the heartaches and challenges with faith and serenity. . . . A woman can and must have an identity and feel useful, valued, and needed whether she is single or married. She must feel that she can do something for someone else that no one else ever born can do” (“What It Means to Be a Daughter of God,” *Liabona*, Jan. 2000, 123–24; *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 102). ■



ILLUSTRATED BY SHANNON CHRISTENSEN

## The Exit Interview

By Ofelia J. Hurtado

One particular conversation has been a great blessing to me in my spiritual progress and will continue to be forever. When I finished my mission, I had an exit interview with my mission president. He talked about the changes that would come into my life when I went home. He told me that if I wanted to stay active, I needed to always have a calling, and if I didn't have one, I should talk to my bishop. The other piece of counsel he gave me was even more emphatic. He said that if I wasn't going to marry in the temple, I should not get married at all.

I followed his advice to the letter, and every time I was tempted to marry out of the temple, I remembered his words. They gave me the strength I needed to hold to my decision to marry in the temple.

Generally speaking, returned missionaries struggle because we want to get married soon. It is even more difficult when members of our wards and branches ask us why we're not married yet. Time goes by, and if we aren't married, we often hear conversations that are hurtful and may make us bitter.

But I'm grateful to my mission president, who gave me the wise

counsel to marry only in the temple, because now I'm reaping the fruit of it. Ten years went by after my mission before I met my eternal companion. We were married in the Caracas Venezuela Temple in 2000, and it was

**I** will always be grateful for the counsel my mission president gave me at the end of my mission.

a beautiful experience. While I waited, nothing could stop me from trusting the words of the Lord's servant.

I now have the good fortune to be the mother of a little girl, and I'm glad I was able to give her the blessing of being born in the covenant. When I look at her, I see the impact of the conversation I had with my mission president. ■

*Ofelia J. Hurtado is a member of Las Delicias Ward, Maracay Venezuela Stake.*



# Groceries or Tithing?

By Charlotte Arnold

I was in my first year of employment with a cosmetics company. At the time I was divorced and lived alone with my two children. In December the company sent each salesperson large boxes containing the Christmas merchandise we were to sell during the holiday season. That meant, however, that a large amount had been withdrawn from my salary. When I calculated all my monthly expenses and tithing, I had enough for three people to live on—but only for one week. And this money had to cover groceries for the entire month and gas for the car, which I needed for my work.

When our home teacher came, I told him about our situation. I told him I would not be able to pay my tithing because if I did, I wouldn't be able to feed my family. My faithful home teacher counseled me to pay tithing. He recommended that I do it faithfully, and the Lord would surely bless me. My home teacher had always been

distinguished by faithfulness and reliability. I jokingly told him, "If I cannot buy groceries, I will come to you." But I trusted him and did not want to disappoint him by not following his advice. So I paid a full tithing.

When I presented the Christmas merchandise early in the month, I was able to sell many of my goods. By the end of the month I had sold all of the Christmas items and all of the goods I had had in stock for several

months. Had I had more products on hand, I would likely have been able to sell them too.

My home teacher's promise was completely fulfilled. The Lord really did open the windows of heaven. We had more money than we needed that month. Later I inquired of my colleagues how their Christmas business had gone. They were not satisfied. At that time, a recession had caused a strong decline in sales in

the cosmetics industry.

How grateful I am to that home teacher for giving me this good counsel. I have had a strong testimony of tithing ever since. When I visit teach sisters who feel they have too little money to pay tithing, I share my testimony about how much we will be blessed if we do so. ■

*Charlotte Arnold is a member of the Essen Ward, Dortmund Germany Stake.*

**B**ecause of the large amount that had been withdrawn from my monthly salary, I had only enough money to cover our expenses for one week.



## Your Book Is a True Book

By Ann Cue

The day the missionaries knocked on my door will always stand out as one of the pivotal moments of my life. It wasn't that I was searching for meaning—I had been deeply religious since childhood. I had spent seven years in a convent, and although I had left that lifestyle because it wasn't bringing me closer to God, I was involved in my church congregation working with the choir and teaching religion.

In fact, I had made a firm resolution not to discuss religion with any door-to-door missionaries because the spirit of contention frequently arose when conflicting interpretations of scripture were discussed. But the Lord, in His goodness, had prepared me for this visit. A few months earlier I had heard someone make a remark about a "Mormon book" connected to the mythology of South America. This prompted me to want to investigate any light such a book might shed on some themes I had already studied. I had filed this away for future reference, knowing that sooner or later I would read the Mormon book and investigate its mythological validity.

Answering the door that day, I was not thinking about books or mythological themes. I was a busy young

mother spending most of my energy tending a small baby and chasing a very active three-year-old. But as I approached the door, my mind was overcome with a kind of vision, a mental picture of Abraham going to



the door of his tent on the day he received an important message. I was impressed with the premonition that opening that door would bring a message of some importance.

Nevertheless, I was confused when all that stood there were these two young men labeled as Latter-day Saint missionaries. If it hadn't been for the "vision," I would have politely said good-bye and shut the door. I decided, instead, that I needed to find out what sort of message they had for me.

It started out all wrong. One of them asked me if I believed in prophets. Of course I did. But when these young men enthusiastically presented me a photo of 15 men in modern business suits and proclaimed that prophets and apostles were currently on the earth, credibility was

stretched to the limit. I had been brought up in a religion whose clergy

**W**hen the missionaries returned, I had a message of great importance for

them:

**"Your book is a true book!"**

dressed the part, and business

suits were not what they wore! So I decided, generously, to ignore the remark. And I searched mentally for some rational foundation for the "vision" still fresh in my mind.

I do not remember how I made the connection that "Latter-day Saint" missionaries might know something about a "Mormon" book. But once that thought crossed my mind, I was quick to pursue the topic.

"Don't you have some kind of book?" I asked. They did. I told them I had not found it in the library and did not know where to get it. Maybe they could help me. They could. They volunteered to come back with a copy the following week. And I made a mental note to be unavailable for religious "discussion" so they could simply drop off the book and leave.

When I finally did receive my copy of the book, I thanked the young men and agreed, again without any sense of commitment, that they could come back to answer any questions I had. Later that evening with my husband home from work and the children somewhat settled down, I picked up the book and began to read.

Nothing had prepared me for what I found in its pages. And it was with awe, shock, delight, and some confusion that I shortly announced to my husband my most amazing discovery: "This is a book of scripture!"

There was no doubt at all. I had done enough serious scripture study and had read enough of the world's sacred literature to become immediately aware that this book was not a record of myth or an ancient history text or anything other than the true word of God. It spoke to me with that spiritual voice, and as I began following footnotes and looking up topics that interested me, it gave me answers to many of the theological questions I had puzzled over for years. It was, without doubt, the most exciting book I had ever picked up, and it continued to amaze and edify me whichever page I opened it to.

When the young missionaries returned as they had promised, I was home. And I had a message of great importance for them. I told them something I felt they needed to know: "Your book is a true book!" And I demanded to know why it was the property of *their* church, feeling that

it was entirely in the wrong hands!

At that point, I was ready to listen to what they had to say. After many months of investigation, I came to know that this wonderful book had not only brought me light and knowledge beyond my highest expectations, but it had also led me to the fulness of the gospel, the power of the priesthood, and the knowledge that those 15 men in business suits were evidence of the true Church of Jesus Christ, present again upon the earth. ■

*Ann Cue is a member of the Madison Fourth Ward, Madison Wisconsin Stake.*

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## *Growing in the Gospel*

By Douglas Zardo

**M**y wife and I had taught our children to pray to Heavenly Father, but we did not attend any church regularly—we believed we could love God just as well in our home. Our lives began to change when two young missionaries came to my office in early March 1997.

They told me they would like to give me a special gift. I asked them to come to my home that evening when all my family would be there. That night they brought us not only a spiritual message but the gift of the Book of Mormon.

During the subsequent weeks, the missionaries returned to our house

many times. We learned to pray sincerely, we learned new commandments from the Lord, and finally we were invited to become members of the true Church of Jesus Christ. Baptism would be the first step in becoming associated with the Church.

My wife and I were baptized on March 26, 1997. Three months after our baptism, our bishop called me to be Sunday School president. I resisted, saying that I could not fulfill this calling because I wasn't prepared for it. The bishop, however, persuaded me to accept this challenge and gave me the Sunday School manual to study.

Two months later the Gospel Doctrine teacher called me during the week to tell me she could not be at church on Sunday to give her lesson on section 98 of the Doctrine and Covenants. She named three other people who could substitute for her. I contacted them, but they all had previous engagements. As I hung up the phone after the last conversation, I felt that Heavenly Father wanted me to teach this class.

I was not familiar with the Doctrine and Covenants, but with the help of the bishop's first counselor, the ward library, and the lesson manual, I was able to prepare the lesson.

I was nervous to teach ward members who knew more about the gospel than I did. But during my short time in the Church, I had learned that if we pray to Heavenly Father, He will help us. On Sunday before the class began, I asked for

peace and strength. As I entered the classroom, the brothers and sisters were smiling and receptive, and they helped me. All participated attentively, and I felt that the Spirit of the Lord had blessed me to impart that important lesson.

Afterward I had the assurance that Heavenly Father only gives us tasks that we are able to fulfill—with His assistance and help from other members.

After eight months I received the Melchizedek Priesthood. My son,

Anderson, who was not a member of the Church, had a skin problem on

his neck and had already been examined by three doctors. But even after taking antibiotics he saw no improvement.

I believed the priesthood could help him, and I explained priesthood blessings to him, but he did not accept my offer of one. He thought the medications would soon heal the infection. Finally, after several months he asked me for a blessing.

This was the first time I had exercised my priesthood in this way. Five days later Anderson entered my room very happy. His neck was completely healed.

As the one-year anniversary of our baptism approached, I was called to serve as the ward mission leader. This time I had no hesitation in accepting my calling. My wife was called to serve as the second counselor in the Relief Society.

In April 1998 we were sealed in the São Paulo Brazil Temple. We will never forget that day, as we made new covenants with our Heavenly Father.

A month after our sealing, we attended a stake conference where a new stake presidency was called and sustained. Our bishop was called into the stake presidency. Much to my surprise, I was called to serve as the new bishop of our ward. I was astonished and insecure, but I never questioned the calling. In fact, as I accepted the calling, I had the assurance that God was blessing me and that He would help me to fulfill the calling of bishop.

As a bishop I learned that we are building the Church of Jesus Christ all across the earth and that through a prophet, seer, and revelator, He has commissioned us to take the gospel to all nations, peoples, and tongues.

Our lives have changed because my wife and I allowed the gospel to enter our hearts. Now we understand that if we are faithful to the

covenants made in the temple with Heavenly Father, He will bless us in this life, strengthen us in our callings, and eventually receive us into His presence. ■

*Douglas Zardo is a member of the Indianópolis Ward, São Paulo Brazil Santo Amaro Stake.*

**I** was nervous to teach ward members who knew more about the gospel than I did, but I had learned that if we pray, Heavenly Father will help us.



## Scripture Study on the Road

**M**y scriptures go where I go, and I travel a lot in my work. On the road, however, my scripture study is a little bit different than it is at home. I carry a compact scripture set that I have prepared for studying on the road by premarking

verses that inspire me to do what is right. All I have to do is turn to one of these scriptures, and my focus becomes clearer as I feel the Spirit. I find that if I continue my scripture study during my travels, I can more easily resist temptations for inappropriate thoughts, behaviors, or activities. And my travel time often provides me with a chance to feast on the scriptures, focusing on certain topics or memorizing meaningful passages.

*Roger Crist, North Field Ninth Ward, Pleasant Grove Utah North Field Stake*

## Families Are Forever

**Y**ears ago when my aunt died unexpectedly, I embroidered a wall hanging for my grieving uncle that said, “Families Are Forever.” This gospel truth comforted him then, and he still treasures it, proudly displaying my gift on his wall. Though he doesn’t share my religious beliefs, we still discuss and agree on this beautiful truth. Since none of my extended family are members of the Church, I am grateful for all opportunities to share common beliefs.

*Alison Affeltranger, Sego Lily Ward, Sandy Utah Granite South Stake*

## Acid Free, Worry Free

**P**ermanently preserving records was of utmost concern even anciently, when words were engraved. Jacob recorded, “But whatsoever things we write upon anything save it be upon plates must perish and vanish away” (Jacob 4:2). Though we don’t engrave our records today, we can still take some precautions to preserve our documents. As an archive preservation specialist for the Church, I recommend the following preservation tips for journals and other important paper documents.

**Pens.** Use waterproof, fade-proof







**Caring for Converts**

Soon after joining the Church as a college student, I found many joys—and trials. Though initially I had no support group, loving Church members soon helped me to more deeply understand the gospel of Jesus Christ. Because of my experience, my husband and I try to reach out to others who are new to the Church. We encourage you and your family to do likewise, perhaps beginning with the following ideas.

**1. Invite new converts to your home.** An invitation to dinner or family home evening can help new members see how your family has implemented gospel teachings. For

instance, blessing the food or teaching basic family home evening lessons can help reinforce or introduce gospel concepts. As you live and share the gospel, others will feel the warm influence of the Spirit.

**2. Invite new members to share their conversion experiences.** New converts are often excited about their newly formed testimony. As they share their testimony with others, it will grow and will strengthen others as well.

**3. Study the scriptures together.** When a new convert in our ward was struggling to understand the scriptures, we invited her to study with us. Using an institute course manual to supplement our reading, we all gained a deeper understanding of the scriptures.

**4. Find a common interest.** Take an institute class or attend a sporting

event together. Make a sincere effort to become a true friend.

**5. Be supportive.** If your new-member friends struggle to adjust during this transitional time, listen to their concerns. Help them find answers in Church resources. Pray and fast for and with them when appropriate, sharing your testimony when you feel prompted.

**6. Let them help you.** It is vital for converts to feel needed at church. Help them to become involved by inviting them to assist you with your Church responsibilities when appropriate.

**7. Help them prepare to attend the temple.** Love and support them as they practice good lifestyle habits. Encourage them when needed. Show by example the blessings we receive from obeying the Lord's commandments.

*Kersten Campbell,  
Terre View Ward,  
Moscow  
Idaho Stake*



documents will smear when wet, and laser-printed pages will stick together under hot conditions.

Though paper isn't as permanent as the ancient plates, we can still

prepare lasting records in the hope that "our children will receive them with thankful hearts" (Jacob 4:3).

*Chris McAfee, Spring Creek Second Ward,  
Springville Utah Spring Creek South Stake*

pens when handwriting any information.

**Paper.** Use acid-free, lignin-free paper. Most modern papers are expected to last quite a while, but bond paper is still considered to be the best.

**Digital.** Don't expect digital documents (computer generated) to last. Currently, it is safe to assume that "modern" storage methods—hard drives, floppy disks, compact discs, and other digital media—will be outdated after 10 years. Even with saved backups, the best option is to print your word documents onto acid-free paper with an ink-jet printer using pigmented inks (nonpigmented inks are not permanent) or with a laser printer.

**Storage.** Since direct contact with nonarchival items can harm your documents, protect them in containers made from archival materials. Boxes, folders, and other paper containers should be acid and lignin free. Polyethylene plastic containers are also good, especially if you are preserving photos. Plastic sleeves should also be polyethylene, polyester, or polypropylene—never acetate or vinyl. Also, when possible, avoid using vinyl three-ring binders. Store items in dark, cool, dry areas. Avoid contact with sunlight and fluorescent lighting and areas where water may be a concern. Storage conditions are especially important when you consider today's current household printing methods. Ink-jet-printed

# President Hinckley Recovers from Surgery

By Brittany Karford, Church Magazines

Following his first overnight hospital stay of his nearly 96 years, President Gordon B. Hinckley appeared to be recovering well in the weeks after a cancerous portion of his large intestine was removed. As this issue of the *Ensign* was being prepared for printing, President Hinckley looked forward to resuming his vigorous schedule leading the more than 12 million members of the Church.

When called as the 15th President of the Church in 1995, President Hinckley told reporters he had spent only one night in the hospital—not for himself, but with a sick child. Throughout his 70 years of Church service, the prophet has remained healthy and active.

However, when a cancerous growth was discovered in his large intestine during a routine medical screening earlier this year, he was scheduled for surgery at LDS Hospital in Salt Lake City. The growth was successfully removed on January 24, 2006, in a laparoscopic procedure, a less invasive process in which the surgeon makes smaller incisions and uses tiny cameras as guides. President Hinckley was discharged one week later.

As expected, his counselors, President Thomas S. Monson and President James E. Faust, handled his workload in his absence.

The office of the President received a number of heartwarming get-well wishes for

President Hinckley during his stay in the hospital. “President Hinckley is grateful for the outpouring of love and concern shown by members of the Church during his recovery,” reported his secretary, Don Staheli.

Among those who wished President Hinckley a speedy recovery was well-known newsman Mike Wallace from CBS and *60 Minutes*. The two met 10 years ago when

Mr. Wallace did a profile on President Hinckley, a report that the veteran journalist later called one of his most memorable experiences.

“I send a message of respect, of love, of friendship, and admiration,” he said upon hearing of President Hinckley’s surgery. “And darn it, get back on your feet quickly.”

President Hinckley is known Churchwide as the

most traveled President in the Church’s history. Just last fall he completed a 10-city worldwide trip in 13 days.

The last Churchwide appearance he made before his surgery was on December 23, 2005, when he spoke from Vermont in a broadcast to Saints worldwide during a bicentennial birthday celebration honoring the Prophet Joseph Smith.

President Hinckley celebrated his 95th birthday nearly a year ago on June 23, 2005, with a gathering attended by 22,000. President David O. McKay, who lived to be 96 years old, has been the oldest President of the Church.

President Hinckley’s own father, Bryant S. Hinckley, lived to be 94. His mother fought cancer, but she eventually lost the battle, passing away during his youth.

He served in the First Presidency for 14 years and in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for 20 years prior to being called to lead the Church on March 12, 1995. Even then, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles commented on his energy: “President Hinckley is the youngest 84-year-old anyone can remember. The brisk bounce in his step, the unrestrained buoyancy of his spirit, and his consuming appetite for hard work and long hours would be admired in a man half his age. President Gordon B. Hinckley looks young, acts young, and loves youth with all its potential and promise” (“President Gordon B. Hinckley: Stalwart and Brave He Stands,” *Ensign*, June 1995, 2–3). ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND

**President Hinckley acknowledges the audience during his 95th birthday celebration.**

## “This Work Will Continue to Go Forward”: Elder Ballard Discusses Missionary Safety

This work will continue to go forward, regardless of what happens, regardless of what the future may hold,” said Elder M. Russell Ballard, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, as he discussed the safety and well-being of the Church’s 52,000 missionaries in January 2006.

Earlier that month, three missionaries lost their lives in the field: one was killed in a shooting and two died in an automobile collision. A fourth missionary made a full recovery from wounds he suffered in the shooting.

Elder Ballard expressed condolences to all those grieving: “The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve extend our love to you, pray that the Lord will bless you, and that the peace of the Lord will ultimately come to your hearts.” No matter how many missionaries there are, he added, “When we lose one the whole Church mourns and our hearts go out to the parents, to the siblings, and to the priesthood leaders over such a tragic loss.”

Though violence and accidents happen from time to time, Elder Ballard said such tragic deaths are rare among Latter-day Saint missionaries. “The safest place in the world for 19- to 21-year-old young men and 21-year-old young women is in the service of the Lord in the mission field, scattered out over the four



**Elder M. Russell Ballard**

corners of the earth,” he said.

Elder Ballard emphasized that the Church does “the very, very best we know how” to protect their health and safety while they serve in 343 missions covering the earth. He reviewed several key elements of missionary organization and training that help keep missionaries safe:

- Training in personal safety and good health practices begins in the Church’s 16 Missionary Training Centers and continues in zone conferences and district meetings throughout the time of missionary service.
- Missionaries always work in pairs and are required to stay with their companions.
- Qualified, mature, inspired mission presidents and their wives shepherd the young people in their missions “like they were their very own children.”
- An organization of assistants to the mission president, zone leaders, and district leaders “is

structured to watch over and be very careful where we place missionaries.”

- Consultation with local Church leaders and members about the safety of specific areas and neighborhoods is ongoing. Missionaries are instructed to avoid unsafe areas.
- Careful instruction in automobile safety is provided for those using cars.
- Ongoing safety training is provided for missionaries who ride bicycles.
- When walking, missionaries are encouraged to walk swiftly and with purpose. They are instructed to minimize the objects they have with them and carry only cash sufficient for

that day’s needs. If accosted by thieves, missionaries are trained not to resist, to avoid confrontation, and to give up whatever money they have.

- A network of 80 physicians serve as full-time volunteer missionaries around the world “so mission presidents have access to the best medical advice they can possibly get right within the boundaries of their own areas.” An additional 200 volunteer nurses and others with medical and health-care backgrounds are supporting the missionary force, said Elder Ballard.
- Missionary apartments are periodically inspected for safety and cleanliness. Missionaries are moved to different apartments whenever needed. Elder Ballard concluded



**Elder Ballard says the Church takes seriously the safety of its more than 52,000 missionaries serving in 343 missions.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT REIER

by emphasizing that such tragedies will not stop the Church's work of sharing the restored gospel of the Savior: "Joseph Smith made it abundantly clear that there would

be nothing that would stop this work from rolling forward till the Great Jehovah comes forward and says the work is done. And He hasn't said that yet." ■

## Penetrating Hearts through Sight and Sound

The Audiovisual Department of the Church captures the sounds and images that continue to help spread the voice of the Lord unto all people (see D&C 1:2). Through current video, photography, broadcast, Internet, and engineering technology, the department helps portray

the Church's messages. "Technology provides significant support to the ongoing mission of the Church," said President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency. "I am certain the Lord expects us to apply it to the advancement of His purposes and the

blessing of mankind" ("This Is Our Day," *Ensign*, May 1999, 19).

Advancing the Lord's work for the Audiovisual Department means helping members and others who view its work to know, feel, and act upon gospel principles. An important distinction between the Church's Audiovisual Department and other creative studios is the message presented. In all audiovisual productions, the message originates from another Church department or from priesthood leaders. The role of the Audiovisual Department is to design the appropriate look and feel for that message.

### International Development

Members in Bishop Raymond Ruiz's ward in the Philippines learned how to conduct a reverent Primary after watching a local training video produced by the Audiovisual Department.

Bishop Ruiz said: "The following Sunday after we showed the Primary training video, I came out of my office to observe the Primary children. I saw that they were reverently lining up to enter their room one by one. I also saw that the leaders were standing by the door to greet the children as they entered. I realized that the Primary leaders were actually doing what was shown in the video."



PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA SMITH

Actors portray Joseph and Emma Smith in the new Audiovisual Department production *Joseph Smith: The Prophet of the Restoration*.



**Young women and their leaders gather for a general Young Women meeting that is broadcast from the Conference Center by the Audiovisual Department.**

As it did in the Philippines Area, the Audiovisual Department assists Area Presidencies in preparing and distributing training materials. In other areas, such as the Europe East Area, the department provides technical assistance to allow the Area Presidency to train local leaders through video-conferencing.

#### **Internet and DVDs**

As the Church has grown and spread across the world, new technology has been developed which has made communication with even remote areas possible.

Distributing audiovisual materials to Church members in many languages has become easier with the development of DVDs and the Internet. One DVD can replace several dozen VHS tapes produced for the same general conference. On VHS tapes, a production could be dubbed in only one language and had to be matched to the appropriate television format. Now a single DVD can hold up

to 26 language translations. The DVD format is also the new international video standard, eliminating the need to match international television standards. DVD players have been placed in Church meetinghouses throughout the world, and the Church is currently converting existing videos to DVD.

In addition to DVD technology, the Internet is also proving to be a highly interactive medium that can deliver broadcasts and interactive training.

The Audiovisual Department helped design interactive online training lessons for the Young Women and Primary auxiliaries. These lessons, which can be downloaded from [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org), have a potential to distribute interactive training to thousands of members.

#### **Broadcasts**

April and October general conferences are two of the most widely viewed productions with which the department is involved. General

conference can reach up to 97 percent of Church members through live broadcasts. The other 3 percent of the Church receives recordings of conference on DVD after its conclusion.

Preparations for general conference involve many technicians. Camera and teleprompter operators, audio controllers, producers, and photographers are only a part of the team that helps ready dozens of cameras, several control rooms, sound systems, and facilities for interpretation, American Sign Language, and closed-captioning for conference and other broadcasts.

The department also broadcasts the following Church meetings: Church Educational System firesides, remote stake conferences, worldwide training meetings, general Relief Society and Young Women meetings, and temple dedications.

#### **Motion Pictures**

The most recognizable Audiovisual Department productions are Church films such as the new *Joseph Smith: The Prophet of the Restoration*. Church films are developed upon approval by the First Presidency and are created primarily at the Church's motion picture studio in Provo, Utah.

The studio is located near Brigham Young University's Provo campus. Nestled within the 25-acre (10-ha) wooded area are several cinder block buildings and sets replicating early 1800s-style buildings, including an exact replica of the Newel K. Whitney store

located in Kirtland, Ohio.

Unlike most Hollywood studios, the Church's studio does not rent its equipment. The studio facilities include a metal shop, a wood shop, several audio recording studios, and a wardrobe storage area. Sets and backdrops for films are created on-site.

At this studio, portions of the Church's full-length motion pictures such as *Legacy* and *The Testaments of One Fold and One Shepherd* were also filmed. Editing of all Church motion pictures takes place here. Short video clips shown between sessions of general conference are also produced at the site.

#### **Engineering**

When the new movie about Joseph Smith opened in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building, the Audiovisual Department had created not only the film but the projection system that plays it.

The engineering division of the Audiovisual Department designs and creates systems capable of displaying the department's productions. Sometimes this process involves modifying existing technology; sometimes it includes designing and patenting a unique system.

The Church currently holds several patents for systems built by the engineering division. Engineering created the systems used to run temple ordinance presentations, Church historical site exhibits, and visitors' center exhibits. The engineering division designs needed technology when it is not available commercially.

Other engineering projects include working closely with temple architects to ensure that temple designs will support audiovisual systems. Audiovisual engineers install audiovisual equipment in a new temple before its dedication. Engineers periodically reevaluate these systems to simplify technical support needed for temple audiovisual equipment, making it easier for local temple staffs to identify and fix problems with minimal assistance.

“We have the responsibility to monitor new technologies

and to evaluate their ability and to incorporate them carefully to build the kingdom,” said Lynn Hadfield, director of the department’s engineering division.

As the Audiovisual Department’s sights and sounds continue to teach, train, and testify, the department helps to fulfill the Lord’s prophecy that there will be “no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated” (D&C 1:2) by the gospel. ■

## Volunteers Are Essential in Welfare Processing Plants

By Walter Cooley, Church Magazines

**B**y packaging 24-ounce packets of pudding for one afternoon at the Church’s dairy processing plant in Salt Lake City, John Ellsworth and his son, Scott, fulfilled their ward’s welfare assignment for the month. The four-hour shift was also an opportunity for a father to teach his 19-year-old son

about some of the projects the Church operates beyond its three-hour Sunday meetings.

“We could have sat at home or worked in the yard,” Brother Ellsworth said at the end of his assignment. “But when I go home tonight, I will know that I have made a difference and



***Cheese is just one of many products produced and processed by the Church with volunteer help.***

done something worthwhile.”

Member volunteers like Brother Ellsworth are an indispensable resource at the dairy plant and at the Church’s other 18 welfare processing plants. These facilities produce the peanut butter, nonfat dry milk, beef, raisins, macaroni, canned fruit, soap, and other products that will stock thousands of shelves in bishops’ storehouses. Church-owned processing plants make most of the food products distributed to bishops’ storehouses in the United States.

Last year members of the Church donated more than four million hours at welfare farms, facilities, and processing plants. This volunteer work demonstrates a fundamental principle of the welfare program.

The Church’s welfare handbook instructs: “Providing for the poor and needy in the Lord’s way

means that the giver helps those who are less fortunate by giving according to what he has received from God.”

Members give to the welfare program through fast offerings, humanitarian aid donations, and fulfilling assignments to serve in welfare processing plants and canneries.

Processing plants help package or can food items shipped to the plant from Church

welfare farms. For example, in Church processing facilities, wheat is ground into flour, milk is made into butter, tomatoes are stewed for salsa, and flour is used to make bread. Members fulfill the labor needs at processing facilities when they volunteer.

“I think volunteering is one way to show that you are grateful,” said Vicki Green of the Salt Lake Butler Stake. Sister Green signed up through her Relief Society to fulfill one of her ward’s shifts at the dairy plant. While packaging cheese during her assignment, she said she didn’t realize the number of items produced by the Church.

Although the Church produces several dozen products, the more impressive fact in the eyes of visitors from other faiths is the willingness of members to volunteer. Visitors frequently ask, “How do you get people to come and do this?”

President Hinckley answered this question when he said: “We seek no commendation or thank-you. It is



***Jeane Sargent, a volunteer from the Salt Lake Butler Stake, packages cheese at the Church-owned processing plant.***

compensation enough that when we help one of the least of these our Father's children, we have done it unto Him and His Beloved Son" ("I Was an Hungred, and Ye Gave Me Meat," *Ensign*, May 2004, 58).

Robert Davis is one such member who frequently volunteers at the dairy plant simply for the satisfaction of doing something to help some of the Lord's other children. "I'm retired now," Brother Davis said. "I like to be of service. It makes me feel more worthwhile."

Other retired members are donating time, up to 32 hours per week, to welfare facilities as Church service missionaries. Of the 12,225 Church service missionaries, one in four serves in a welfare facility. These missionaries receive

a calling to serve locally from their stake president.

Shelba and LaDell Steadman from the West Jordan Utah Mountain View Stake serve one afternoon per week at the Church's dairy plant on Welfare Square. After their first day at the plant, the Steadmans drove home and were so tired they took a nap in the car before going into their house. Elder and Sister Steadman have watched members discover the joy of serving since they began their own service mission early in 2005.

"I think members enjoy what they are doing," said Sister Steadman. "Many say, 'I didn't know this was so much fun. I want to come back.'"

During the afternoon, Sister Steadman and her volunteers packaged almost

3,600 pounds (1,630 kg) of cheese. Meanwhile Brother Davis, Brother Ellsworth, and three other priesthood brethren boxed and organized cases of pudding. The men are from different wards and didn't know each other before their shift began; nevertheless, they were united in their desire to help others.

"It's a wonderful system," Brother Ellsworth said. "My high priests group leader gets up on Sunday and says we need a few brethren, and they show up. It's the army of the Lord." ■

## New Housing Selected for a New Campus

Select floors of the Plaza Hotel will become student housing for LDS Business College this fall as the school makes its transition from its present location in Salt Lake City to its new campus at the Triad Center downtown. The housing arrangement with the hotel will be used for at least a year and then evaluated.

Located on the block immediately west of the Salt Lake Temple, the Plaza Hotel will house 132 female students and 2 head residents while the remaining floors will continue to host hotel patrons. Four of the 13 floors will be designated as student housing.

"It hasn't been done before that we're aware of," said Matt Tittle, assistant dean of students and housing director for LDS Business College. "But we're excited about it."

The decision to move the students to the Plaza location, Brother Tittle said, was made because the hotel is only one and one-half blocks from the new campus. In addition, a TRAX (light rail) station is located just in front of the hotel. With a discounted UTA education pass, students will have direct access to public transportation right outside their door.

Brother Tittle said the residents in the current dorms at LDS Business College are well behaved and should continue to be good neighbors when housed in the hotel.

On-campus housing for male and married students will remain at the old campus about a mile (1.6 km) east of the Triad Center. The South Hall will provide housing for 60 male students, and the North Hall will provide 11 apartments for married students. These units, unlike the rooms at the Plaza Hotel, have been remodeled over the last four years and include kitchens.

Students at the hotel will be required to purchase a food plan since there will be no cooking facilities in the rooms. However, plans call for a few central kitchens and lounge areas to be provided for residents.

Single female residents currently living in the LDS Business College dorms will be required to vacate by the end of June, and the college is discussing transportation options with UTA officials for the male and married residents at the old location.

The LDS Business College intends to move its campus to the Triad Center, just north of the Gateway shopping district, by this fall. The decision to move the college is part of the Church's downtown revitalization project. Plans on what will be done with the old business college property, including the Enos A. Wall Mansion that has been home to the campus for 40 years, have not been released.

The college is home to 1,275 students, including

### Church-Owned Processing Plants

Bakery—Salt Lake City, Utah  
Dairy—Salt Lake City, Utah  
Meat—Spanish Fork, Utah  
Mill—Kaysville, Utah  
Pasta—Kearns, Utah  
Soap—Salt Lake City, Utah

### Church-Owned Canneries

Boise, Idaho  
Denver, Colorado  
Houston, Texas  
Idaho Falls, Idaho  
Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada  
Lindon, Utah  
Mesa, Arizona  
Murray, Utah  
Ogden, Utah  
Sacramento, California  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
Seattle, Washington  
St. George, Utah  
Washington, D.C.

approximately 300 international students from more than 50 countries. It currently has 112 students living in

on-campus housing, but the addition of rooms in the Plaza Hotel in the fall will make more housing available. ■

## Sculptor's Works Top Temple Towers Worldwide

There are only eight angel Moroni sculptures worldwide that Karl Quilter did not create. "Salt Lake, Los Angeles, Washington D.C., Seattle, Mexico City . . ." he can recite the eight on demand.

Aside from those, the sculpture cresting every temple from Utah to Accra, Ghana, is his work, numbering more than 100; however, he doesn't know that exact total off the top of his head.

His sculpture work for temples began in 1954,

when he helped to create the oxen for the baptismal fonts in the Bern Switzerland, London England, and Hamilton New Zealand Temples.

"I was just a young kid in my 20s back then," Brother Quilter says.

But he discovered his talent in sculpture earlier than that, in a happenstance way.

In high school he had shown great potential in painting, but when his art teacher saw what Brother Quilter could do with clay he

told him, "Karl, don't ever paint again."

Brother Quilter pursued his gift for sculpture, moving to Salt Lake City to study with noted sculptor Avard Fairbanks. Brother Quilter obtained degrees from the University of Utah in sculpture and industrial design, continuing his education later at Brigham Young University. However, his work for the temples began before he finished his schooling.

After participating in shaping those oxen in the mid-1950s, he made his first angel to create a cast for a series of smaller temples. Twenty angels were made. They can be seen on the Boise Idaho, Papeete Tahiti, and Nuku'alofa Tonga Temples, to name a few. This is the smallest of Brother Quilter's angel Moroni designs.

He has created a total of three different designs, varying in size to match the size of the temple they will crest, and an architect selects from those three. The largest of the sculptures stands 13 feet tall. So how is it placed as high as 120 feet in the air? It is really quite simple, Brother Quilter explains, now that the angels are constructed with fiberglass, a material that is lightweight, strong, and easily handled.

"They are half the weight of any other composite material," Brother Quilter said, comparing the fiberglass to bronze and other metals. "That means a lot to a builder."

The fiberglass sculptures are much lighter than the

12-foot bronze sculpture of the angel Moroni that tops the Salt Lake Temple. That sculpture was done by Cyrus E. Dallin, a Utah-born artist who is esteemed as one of America's most talented sculptors. Dallin initially declined the commission, saying he didn't believe in angels. Later, however, he accepted. Upon completing the statue, he said, "My angel Moroni brought me nearer to God than anything I ever did."

Brother Quilter understands that feeling. He says that for him, sculpting the statues is an honor.

In addition to the angel Moroni, Brother Quilter has done most of the oxen for temple baptismal fonts around the world, and he continues to sculpt statues of the nativity displayed on temple grounds at many locations worldwide.

He and his wife, Verna, have 8 children, 42 grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren and reside in Salt Lake City, where they have lived since 1957. Brother Quilter was a seminary teacher for 25 years and an ordinance worker at the Salt Lake Temple for 9 years. He is now on a Church service mission to do artwork, working along with three other painters. He enjoys time for thinking and one-on-one time with each of his children. And to this day, clay is still dear to his heart.

"I carry clay with me wherever I go, and when I have a few minutes, I sit and reflect," he says. ■



**Karl Quilter puts finishing touches on his sculpture of the Angel Moroni, which has been used on temples worldwide.**



## BYU Women's Conference Scheduled

Brigham Young University's Women's Conference 2006 will be held May 4 and 5. Eight hours of selected talks will be broadcast two weeks later on May 19 and again on May 20 over the Church satellite system to meetinghouses throughout the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean. The broadcast will also be on BYUTV, BYU Radio, and on the Internet at [www.byubroadcasting.org](http://www.byubroadcasting.org) on May 19–20 and on KBYU-TV channel 11 beginning May 28.

Church units in Latin America, Europe, Asia, the Pacific, and South Africa can view the broadcast on May 20

and 27. Local units have been authorized to record and retain a set of the broadcasts for Church use only, and members may record presentations for home use only.

For more information, call 1-801-422-7692 or access the Web site at <http://womens.conference.byu.edu>. ■

## Comment

### Drawing from International Membership

I just received the February *Ensign* and read "Confidence to Marry" by Melissa Howell. Though I enjoyed this article's content, I would mostly like to commend Sister Howell for drawing from the Church's broad international membership as she presented her message. It is wonderful to hear from

Saints across the globe and to see how much we all have in common in the gospel, regardless of the differences in our native climes or cultures.

Thank you for representing the international Church and the enlightening views and experiences of its precious members everywhere.

*Jill Davis, Utah*

### Dead Sea Scrolls

I have been reading every issue of the *Ensign* from cover to cover for over 20 years. I do this out of a commitment I made to myself a long time ago. I wanted to insure that my intensive reading program of non-Church-related materials was balanced with a regular immersion in the scriptures and the Church's flagship periodical.

I realize it is not feasible for the *Ensign* to devote itself wholly to the interests of its more academically oriented readership. To a certain extent, you must seek the common denominator.

I am pleased to tell you that I greatly enjoyed reading Andrew Skinner's article "The Dead Sea Scrolls and Latter-day Truth" in the February issue. Please bless us with more articles of this variety in the future.

*Craig H. Schindler, Canada*

### February Issue Written for Me

In many years of reading Church magazines, I've never read one that had so many articles directly related to me as was your February edition of the *Ensign*.

Having recently gone through a divorce because

of my husband's years of infidelity, as well as having a great-great-grandmother who was in the Martin handcart company, I was immediately drawn to the First Presidency Message "Refined in Our Trials." Then I turned the page and could relate immediately with the article "Our Stillborn Baby"—we had a stillborn baby only a few years after burying a two-year-old.

Your article on "Young Adults and the Temple" was also interesting to me. I have a 22-year-old daughter who is approaching that milestone, but because of our recent divorce she is expressing great concerns about trusting and marriage. So to turn yet another page and find the article on "Confidence to Marry" was an answer to prayer.

If that wasn't more than enough, the article "Letting My Bitterness Go" was especially helpful to this same daughter who has been struggling with feelings of anger towards her father. Then, as a final little bonus, "In Tune with His Will" could have been written by me right down to the last chord of wrong notes that I, too, played as the accompanist for the ward choir! All in all, I take it as another "tender mercy" to have so many of my concerns and situations addressed in just one wonderful magazine. Thank you!  
*Name Withheld*

### Correction

In a February 2006 article, the Church's FamilySearch Web site was incorrectly identified. It is [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org). ■

### Call for Articles

How do you successfully have family home evening with small children? With teenagers? With no children in the home? Please send us your creative ideas or stories about family home evenings you have enjoyed.

Please send your submission (up to 800 words) by June 1, 2006, to [ensign@ldschurch.org](mailto:ensign@ldschurch.org) or to *Ensign* Editorial, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150-3220, USA. Clearly mark your submission "Family Home Evening," and at the top of your submission, write your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and ward and stake (or branch and district).

While we cannot acknowledge receipt of individual responses, authors whose submissions are selected for publication will be notified. If you would like your manuscript returned, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope and allow up to a year.





# MAKING THE MOST OF THIS ISSUE

A P R I L 2 0 0 6

## The Hope of Easter

GETHESEMENE, CALVARY, AND THE EMPTY TOMB

Latter-day prophets and apostles describe what happened in the Garden of Gethsemane, on the cross, and at the empty tomb. They bear witness of the Savior's infinite Atonement and His Resurrection. See page 12.

## COMING UNTO CHRIST

Elder Merrill J. Bateman of the Seventy writes: "Jesus invited the multitude to arise and approach Him one by one, to thrust their hands into His side and feel the print of the nails in His hands and feet. Remember, there were 2,500 people. How long would it take for each person to approach the Savior, feel

invitation." See "Becoming a Disciple of Christ," page 16.

## IS THERE LIFE AFTER DEATH?

A missionary's father dies unexpectedly, and she comes face-to-face with the very truths she is teaching to others. To read how she finds comfort in the plan of salvation, see page 61.



*Is there life after death? See "I Needed to Know," p. 61.*

## THE SWEET PEACE OF FORGIVENESS

"If, through the Atonement of Christ, we obtain a remission of sins," explains Elder Daniel P. Alvarez of the Seventy, "then 'though [our] sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.'" See page 7.

## Becoming One in the Faith TOGETHER

Whether you are single or married, the most important aspect of belonging to the Church is to be involved in your ward or branch. To read about how single members from many countries find joy and belonging through Church involvement, see page 42.

**Making Families Eternal**  
FINDING WHAT WAS LOST  
Andres Sanchez helped save

his town's genealogical records during the Spanish Civil War. Later his granddaughter used those same records to open the way to temple ordinances for thousands of her ancestors. See page 58.

## PATIENCE AND EXAMPLE

How long would you wait to have your family sealed to you? It took one woman more than 20 years. But along the way she learned important lessons about being an example and trying to improve herself rather than remaking her husband, who was not a member. See page 30.

## Home Teachers, Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pages 2 and 64.

## For Parents

### COMFORT AND GUIDANCE IN THE PROCLAMATION

Jeffrey Hill was inspired to memorize "The Family: A Proclamation to the World." Then amazing things started happening. Portions of this inspired document would come to his mind at just the right moment to help him deal with challenges he was facing as a husband and father. See page 52.

### OUR CHILD, HIS CHILD

What do you do when a child needs comfort in the middle of the night and you feel you need comfort as well? One daughter taught her father an important lesson about prayer and the sweet presence of the Holy Ghost. See page 10.

### APPRECIATING TODDLERS

A mother with two toddlers underfoot finds a valuable perspective on parenthood in the example of the Savior, who invited little children to come unto Him. See page 57.



*What do you do when a child needs comfort? See "Our Child, His Child," p. 10.*

the print of the nails, touch His side, and perhaps receive a brief embrace? Suppose it took 15 seconds per person. The time required would exceed 10 hours for the multitude to fulfill the

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**The Destruction of Pharaoh's Host, by John Martin**

*After the children of Israel crossed through the Red Sea on dry ground, "the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea. . . . And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and . . . there remained not so much as one of them" (Exodus 14:26, 28).*



**T**he Resurrection “was the greatest miracle of human history,” said President Gordon B. Hinckley. “Earlier He had told them, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life’ (John 11:25). But they had not understood. Now they knew. He had died in misery and pain and loneliness. Now, on the third day, He arose in power and beauty and life, the firstfruits of all who slept, the assurance for men of all ages that ‘as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive’ (1 Corinthians 15:22).” See “From the Garden to the Empty Tomb,” p. 12.